



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

THE  
AVICULTURAL  
MAGAZINE

VOL. VII

AVI  
1092

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.



LIBRARY

OF THE

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOÖLOGY.

35983.

Bought.

August 2, 1910.





THE

# Avicultural Magazine

---

BEING THE JOURNAL OF  
THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY  
FOR THE STUDY OF  
FOREIGN AND BRITISH BIRDS.

EDITED BY  
O. E. CRESSWELL, M.A.  
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE COUNCIL.

VOL. VII.  
NOVEMBER, 1900, TO OCTOBER, 1901.

✠  
London :  
R. H. PORTER,  
7, PRINCES STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.

—  
1901.

## ERRATA.

---

Page 18, Foot Note, *for* beautiful *read* beneficial.

„ 24. lines 12 and 21, *for* Mr. Le Grace *read* Mr. G. Grace.

THE

# Avicultural Society

---

FOR THE STUDY OF  
FOREIGN AND BRITISH BIRDS.

---

## OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR, 1900-1901.

### President:

THE HON. & REV. F. G. DUTTON.

### Vice-President:

MR. A. F. WEINER.

### Council:

MISS R. ALDERSON.

THE REV. H. D. ASTLEY.

DR. A. G. BUTLER.

THE REV. C. D. FARRAR.

MR. H. R. FILLMER.

MR. H. J. FULLJAMES.

MR. R. HUMPHRYS.

MR. E. G. B. MEADE-WALDO.

MR. R. PHILLIPPS.

MR. J. SARGENT.

MR. D. SETH-SMITH.

MR. W. H. ST. QUINTIN.

### Executive Committee:

DR. A. G. BUTLER, MR. R. PHILLIPPS, MR. D. SETH-SMITH.

### Hon. Secretary and Treasurer:

MR. J. L. BONHOTE, Ditton Hall, Fen Ditton, Cambs.

### Editor:

MR. O. E. CRESSWELL, Morney Cross, near Hereford.

### Scrutineer:

MR. P. W. FARMBOROUGH.

### Auditor:

MR. C. L. ROTHERA.

### Bankers:

MESSRS. FOSTER & CO., Cambridge.



## LIST OF MEMBERS.

*Corrected to November 1st, 1900.*

The date following the member's name is the date of his election. "Orig. Mem." signifies that the member joined the Society on its formation in October, 1894. The asterisk denotes that the member belonged to the U. K. Foreign Cage Bird Society, either at the time of its amalgamation with the Avicultural Society or at some time before.

- ABRAHAM, Mr. JOSEPH, 191 and 192, St. George Street, London, E.  
(May, 1895). \*
- ADAMSON, Miss, Ruston Park, Battle, Sussex. (May, 1897).
- AGGS, Mr. H. GURNEY, Pippbrook, Dorking. (Oct., 1897).
- AINLEY, Mr. JOHN WILLIAM, 16, Dalton Green, Dalton, Huddersfield.  
(June, 1895). \*
- ALDERSON, Miss R., Park House, Worksop. (April, 1896).
- ALLBUTT, Mrs., 24, Park Square, Leeds. (Jan., 1897).
- ALSTON, Mr. GAVIN, Yondercroft, Darvel, Ayrshire. (June, 1900).
- ANNINGSON, Mrs. C. L., Walt-ham-sal, Barton Road, Cambridge. (May, 1899).
- ARTHUR, Mr. C. P., Market Place, Melksham, Wilts. (Jan., 1895).
- ARUNDEL, Mr. H. A., Hazelwood House, Loddiswell, R.S.O., S. Devon.  
(April, 1899).
- ASHFORD, Miss GRACE, The Birks, Branksome Wood Road, Bournemouth.  
(Nov., 1896).
- ASTLES, Mr. JOHN, 46, Ruskin Place, Crewe, Cheshire. (Jan., 1899).
- ASTLEY, The Rev. H. D., M.A., F.Z.S., Benbury Park, Newbury, Berks.  
(June, 1895). \*
- BAKER, Mr. L. INGHAM, Larkenshaw, Chobham. (Dec. 1896).
- BAMFORD, Miss ELLA C, St. Cuthbert Leys, Bedford. (June, 1895).
- BARBER, Mrs. JAMES, Clarendon Villa, The Hyde, Hendon, N. W.  
(Jan., 1899).
- BARNES, Mrs., Bloxholm Rectory, Lincoln. (Nov., 1899).
- BATESON, The Hon. LILLA DE YARBURGH, Heslington, York. (Feb., 1900).
- BATTYE, Mr. A. TREVOR, 2, Whitehall Gardens, Westminster, S.W.  
(July, 1898).
- BAXTER, Mrs., Ivy House, Abbey Street, Burton-on-Trent. (Nov., 1897).
- BREEDZLER, Mr. JOHN, 20, Norton Folgate, London, E.C. (Jan., 1898).
- BENTLEY, Mr. DAVID, 80, St. Hubert Street, Great Harwood, nr. Blackburn.  
(July, 1895).
- BETTS, Mr. W. H., F.L.S., F.Z.S., 36, Great James' Street, Bedford Row,  
W.C. (Orig. Mem.)\*
- BLACK, Mr. STANLEY O., Minden, Hereford Road, Southsea. (April, 1899).
- BLATHWAYT, Mr. A. P., Frogmore, Watford, Herts. (Jan., 1895).
- BONHOTE, Mr. J. LEWIS, B.A., F.Z.S., Ditton Hall, Fen Ditton, Cambridge.  
(Dec., 1894).
- BOOTH, Mr. FRANK, North Bar Without, Beverley. (May, 1897).

- BOUSKILL, Mr. G. E., Romanhurst, Bramall Lane, Stockport. (April, 1896).
- BOWLES, Mr. JOHN, J.P., F.L.S., 7, Marine Terrace, Herne Bay. (Oct., 1900).
- BRAMPTON, Miss E., The Moat House, Brentwood, Essex. (Feb., 1898).
- BRIGG, Mr. STANLEY, Bod-Alaw, Llandudno, N. Wales. (Orig. Mem.)
- BRODIE, Mr. CHARLES, Thornton Loch, Innerwick, East Lothian. (Jan., 1896).
- BROOKES, Mr. EDWARD J., Inglesham, Sutton Coldfield. (Feb., 1899).
- BROOKSBANK, Mrs. A. H., Gate Helmsley House, York. (May, 1898).
- BROOKSBANK, Miss, Middleton Hall, Driffeld. (June, 1900).
- BROTHERSTON, Mr. G. M., 16, Coniston Drive, Edinburgh. (Feb., 1895).
- BULLIVANT, The Rev. THOS. PELHAM, Ph.D., B.D., Via di Monserrato, Rome. (July, 1898).
- BULSTRODE, Mr. C. V., Hedgerley Lodge, Madingley Road, Cambridge. (Nov., 1896).
- BULSTRODE, Mr. R., Hedgerley Lodge, Madingley Road, Cambridge. (Dec., 1899).
- BURDITT, Mr. W. F., Elmhurst, 23, Crosby Road, Birkdale, Southport. (Oct. 1898).
- BURGE, Mr. SAMUEL, Ivy Cottage, Fairford. (Nov., 1896).
- BUTLER, Dr. A. G., F.L.S., F.Z.S., 124, Beckenham Road, Beckenham, Kent. (Orig. Mem.)\*
- CAMPS, Mr. H. H. T., F.Z.S., Linden House, Haddenham, Isle of Ely. (Orig. Mem.)\*
- CARPENTER, The Hon. Mrs., Kiplin, Northallerton. (Feb., 1898).
- CARPMAN, Miss, The Ivies, St. Julian's Farm Road, West Norwood. (April, 1896).
- CARRICK, Mr. GEORGE, Strathearn Cottage, Saltcoats, Ayrshire, N.B. (March, 1898).
- CARTER, Mr. WALTER L., Summergate Villa, Parkinson Lane, Halifax. (June, 1895).\*
- CASTELLAN, Mr. VICTOR, Hare Hall, Romford, Essex. (Orig. Mem.)
- CATLEUGH, Mr. W. T., Donnington Road, Newbury, Berks. (Dec., 1894).
- CHAMBERLAIN, Mrs. D'EYNCOURT, Twynham, Christchurch Road, Bournemouth. (Feb., 1897).
- CHAPMAN, Mr. P. GODFREY, 21, Lennox Gardens, S.W. (Oct., 1898).
- CHARRINGTON, Mrs. MOWBRAY, The Warren, Hever, Edenbridge, Kent. (May, 1896).
- CHAWNER, Miss, Forest Bank, Lyndhurst, Hants. (July, 1899).
- COCKSEGE, Mr. E. LE HOUP, Beyton Grange, Suffolk. (Mar. 1898).
- CONNELL, Mrs. A. KNATCHBULL, The Hermitage, Godalming. (Nov., 1897).
- CONYNGHAM, The Dow. Marchioness, 36, Belgrave Square, London, S.W. (Jan., 1900).
- COOPER, Mr. JAMES, Killerby Hall, Scarborough. (Orig. Mem.)
- CRAFER, Mr. ALFRED, 8, Pembroke Road, Kensington, London. (Dec., 1894).
- CREIGHTON, Mr. R., Likoma House, Belle Vue Street, Filey. (Sept., 1897).
- CRESSWELL, Mr. O. E., M.A., J.P., Morney Cross, near Hereford. (Orig. Mem.)
- CRESWELL, Mr. WM. GEORGE, M.D., Eden Lodge, Kingston-on-Thames. (June, 1900).

- CRONKSHAW**, Mr. J., 85, Plantation Street, Accrington. (Dec., 1894).  
**CUMMINGS**, Mr. ALEXANDER, 16, Promenade Villas, Cheltenham. (Dec., 1896).  
**CUNLIFFE**, Mrs. H. J., 20, Eaton Gardens, Hove. (May, 1899).  
**CUSHNY**, Mr. CHARLES, Pain's Hill, Cobham, Surrey. (June, 1896).  
**DALY**, Mr. EDWARD D. H., (late Lieut. Bengal Staff Corps), Cavello Cottage, The Purlieu, Hythe, Southampton. (Dec., 1895).  
**DELL**, Mr. CHARLES, 9, High Street, Harlesden, Middlesex. (July, 1900).  
**DENT**, Mr. C., Old Bank, Scarborough. (Feb., 1899).  
**DEVAS**, Mr. GEORGE, Hartfield, Hayes, Kent. (Oct., 1898).  
**DEWAR**, Mr. J. F., 2, St. Patrick's Square, Edinburgh: (Orig. Mem.)  
**DINGWELL**, Mrs., Knollys Croft, Leigham Court Road, Streatham, S.W. (Aug. 1898).  
**DRUITT**, Mr. C. F., Rainsford House, Chelmsford, Essex. (Jan., 1899).  
**DUNCOMBE**, The Hon. Mrs., The Grange, Nawton, R.S.O., Yorks. (April, 1897).  
**DUNLEATH**, The Lady, Ballywalter Park, Ballywalter, co. Down. (Aug., 1897).  
**DUTTON**, The Hon. and Rev. F. G., Bibury, Fairford. (Orig. Mem.)  
**EAGLE**, Mr. F. GRANT, 16, Hart Street, Edinburgh. (Jan., 1899).  
**EDWARDS**, Miss K., 140, Lower Addiscombe Road, Croydon. (March, 1898).  
**FARMBOROUGH**, Mr. PERCY W., F.Z.S., The Public Library, Edmonton. (June, 1896).  
**FARRAR**, The Rev. C. D., Micklefield Vicarage, Leeds. (Jan., 1895).  
**FIELD**, Mr. GEORGE, Sorrento, Staplehurst, Kent. (March, 1900).  
**FIFE**, Mrs., Langton Hall, Northallerton. (Oct., 1898).  
**FILLMER**, Mr. H. R., Brendon, Harrington Road, Brighton. (Orig. Mem.)  
**FINN**, Mr. F., B.A., F.Z.S., Indian Museum, Calcutta. (March, 1895).  
**FOTHERGILL**, Major, Copt Hall, Hawkhurst, Kent. (April, 1900).  
**FOWLER**, Mr. CHARLES, 26, Broad Street, Blaenavon. (Dec., 1894).  
**FOX**, Mr. C. J., 35, Addington Street, Ramsgate, Kent. (May, 1897).  
**FRANKLIN-HINDLE**, Mr. R., 44, Grosvenor Road, Birkdale, Southport. (Sept., 1898).  
**FROSTICK**, Mr. JOHN, 126, Ramsden Road, Balham, S.W. (Orig. Mem.)  
**FULLJAMES**, Mr. HENRY J., Brooklyn, Elmbourne Road, Bedford Hill, Balham, S.W. (April, 1895).  
**GARROW**, Mr. JAMES, 49, East London Street, Edinburgh. (June, 1900).  
**GIBBINS**, Mr. WILLIAM B., Ettington, Stratford-on-Avon. (June, 1895).  
**GILL**, Mr. ARTHUR, Veterinary Establishment, Bexley Heath, Kent. (Dec., 1899).  
**GILLET**, Miss A. K., Duffield Bank House, Derby. (Nov., 1897).  
**GLASSCOE**, Mr. GEORGE D., 45, Gaywood Road, Walthamstow (Dec., 1898).  
**GODDARD**, Mr. H. E., 5, Lachett Road, South Woodford, Essex (Feb., 1899).  
**GOODFELLOW**, Mr. WALTER, 13, Brunswick Square, London, W.C. (June, 1897).  
**GOSLING**, Mrs. R. H., Manor House, Waltham St. Lawrence, Twyford. (March, 1900).  
**GRACE**, Mr. GUSTAVE LE CHARPENTIER, 24, Wood Street, Wakefield. (March, 1896).

- GRASETT, Mrs. EDWARD, 31, Kensington Gardens Square, Bayswater, London, W. (Oct., 1900).
- GREEN, Mr. ALBERT, 4, Cumnor Terrace, Bournemouth. (Feb., 1898).
- GRIFFITHS, Mr. E., Brislington House, Bristol. (Orig. Mem.)
- GRIGGS, Dr. W. A., 102, London Road, Leicester. (Oct., 1898).
- HAMILTON, Mrs., Bannerdown House, Batheaston, Bath. (Feb., 1895).
- HAMMOND, Mrs. W. A., 2, Eaton Gardens, Hove. (Orig. Mem.)
- HARBOTTLE, Miss, Meadowside, Victoria Place, Budleigh Salterton, Devon. (Dec., 1895).
- HARDINGE, The Hon. Lady, Petite Luquette, Hyères, Var, France. (Nov. 1896).
- HARRISON, Miss EDITH, Waterhouse, Bath. (Sept., 1895).
- HARTLEY, Mrs., St. Helen's Lodge, Hastings. (April, 1897).
- HAWKINS, Mr. L. W., Estrilda, Clive Road, West Dulwich, S.E. (Jan. 1899).
- HENWOOD, Mr. T. E., Auricula Villa, Hamilton Road, Reading (Dec., 1894).
- HESELTON, Mr. H. C., 197, Westminster Road, Liverpool. (Dec., 1899).
- HETT, Mr. CHARLES LOUIS, Springfield, Brigg. (Jan., 1896).
- HINCKES, Mr. R. J., Foxley, Hereford. (Feb., 1899).
- HINCKS, Mr. J. W. R., Leicester. (Oct., 1899).
- HODGSON, Miss, Hernewood, Sevenoaks. (Dec., 1894).\*
- HOPSON, Mr. F. C., Northbrook Street, Newbury. (March, 1897).
- HORSBURGH, Lieutenant B., 4, Richmond Hill, Bath. (Jan., 1898).
- HOULTON, Mr. CHARLES, Denton's Green Lane, St. Helens. (Feb., 1897).
- HOUSDEN, Mr. J. B., Brooklyn, Cator Road, Sydenham. (Orig. Mem.)
- HOWARD, The Lady VICTORIA, Charlton Cottage, Malmesbury. (Oct., 1899).
- HOWMAN, Miss, Sherwood, Essex Grove, Upper Norwood. (March, 1897).
- HUGHES, Mrs., 109, Freshfield Road, Kemp Town, Brighton. (April, 1895).
- HUMPHRYS, Mr. RUSSELL, Lingdale, Bickley, Kent. (April, 1896).
- HUSBAND, Miss, Clifton View, York. (Feb., 1896).
- HUTT, Mr. HENRY T., 24, Cockspur Street, London, S.W. (Nov., 1896).
- JACKSON, Mrs. JAMES, Danecourt, Parkstone, Dorset. (Orig. Mem.)
- JENNISON, Mr. GEORGE, Devonport Park, Stockport. (Sept., 1897).
- JOHNSTONE, Mrs. M., Rougham Hall, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk. (May, 1900).
- JONES, Mr. NORMAN H., Glasmoor, Victoria Road, Bridlington Quay. (Orig. Mem.) \*
- JONES, Mr. ARTHUR, 85, Sidney Road, Homerton. (June, 1895).
- KING, Mr. J. B., Annandale House, Glebe, Kilmarnoch. (Oct., 1896).
- KEENE, Mrs., Sandlea, Abbotsham Road, Bideford, N. Devon. (Feb., 1897).
- KENYON, Lord, Gredington, Whitchurch, Shropshire. (Feb., 1899).
- KNEEN, Mr. T. E., 92, Harrington Road, Workington. (June, 1895).\*
- LAMB, Mrs. R. O., West Denton, Scotswood-on-Tyne. (March, 1898).
- LAMBERT, Mr. FRANK, Langholm, Beverley. (June, 1900).
- LANCASTER, Mrs., 7, Victoria Terrace, Walsall. (Aug., 1897).
- LANDLESS, Mr. W., Portland Villa, Waterloo Road, Ashton-on-Ribble, Preston. (Dec., 1896).
- LANE, Mrs. ARBUTHNOT, 21, Cavendish Square, W. (Nov., 1899).
- LASCELLES, The Hon. GERALD W., Queen's House, Lyndhurst. (Oct. 1896).

- LAW, Mr. E. C., 2, Cromwell Road, Teddington. (Dec., 1897).
- LEEDER, Mr. T. VINER, Dorset House, Bryn Road, Swansea. (Nov., 1899).
- LEIGH, Mr. H. BOUGHTON, Brownsover Hall, Rugby. (May, 1900).
- LENNIE, Mr. J. C., Rose Park, Trinity Road, Edinburgh. (Orig. Mem.)\*
- LILFORD, The Lady, Lilford Hall, Oundle, Northamptonshire. (Jan., 1898).
- LYNCH, Mr. CYRIL, 45, Rua Dr. Corrêa, Cattete, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (April, 1897).
- LYON, Lieut.-Col. F. L. H., R.A., J.P., Harwood, Horsham. (Nov., 1894).
- MAITLAND, Mrs. KEITH, 2, Douglas Gardens, Edinburgh. (July, 1900).
- MARSHALL, Mr. THOMAS, The Grange, 128, High Street, Poplar, E. (Dec., 1894).
- MARTIN, Mr. H. C., 16, Victoria Road, Old Charlton, S.E. (Jan., 1897).
- MATHIAS, Mr. H. W., Doone Cottage, Thames Ditton, Surrey. (March, 1900).
- MAXWELL, Mr. C. T., South Lawn, 24, Acre Lane, Brixton, S.W. (March, 1896).
- MCCORQUODALE, Mrs., Gadlys, Llansadwrn, Isle of Anglesey. (May, 1898).
- MEADE-WALDO, Mr. E. G. B., Stonewall Park, Edenbridge, Kent. (Jan., 1895).
- MITCHELL, Mrs., Crakehall, Bedale, Yorkshire (Sept., 1898).
- MILLER, Lady, The Knole, Bournemouth. (July, 1899).
- MOERSCHHELL, Mr. F., Imperial Hotel, Malvern. (June, 1895).
- MORSHEAD, Lady, Forest Lodge, Binfield, Bracknell, Berks. (Dec., 1894).\*
- MORTIMER, Mrs., Wigmore, Holmwood, Surrey. (Orig. Mem.)\*
- MURGATROYD, Mr. J. W., Bradford Grange, Howden, East Yorks. (May, 1896).
- NEWMAN, Mr. T. H., 20, Montpelier Square, South Kensington, London. (May, 1900).
- NICHOLSON, Mr. ALFRED E., Emlinville, Coltbridge Gardens, Edinburgh. (Oct., 1896).\*
- NICHOLSON, Mr. W., 26, Whitehall Road, Gateshead. (Feb., 1898).
- NOBLE, Mrs., Park Place, Henley-on-Thames. (Oct., 1900).
- Oakey, Mr. W., 46, High Street, Leicester. (March, 1896).\*
- OATES, Mr. F. W., White House Farm, New Leeds, Leeds. (Oct., 1897).
- O'BRIEN, The Hon. Mrs., Moor Park, Ludlow. (Nov., 1897).
- Ogilvy, Mr. HENRY S. T. HAMILTON, Biel, Prestonkirk, East Lothian. (March, 1900).
- OLIVER, Dr. G. H., Station Road, Clayton, Bradford. (Feb., 1897).
- O'REILLY, Mr. NICHOLAS, S., 9, Royal Crescent, Ramsgate, Kent. (Dec., 1894).
- OSBALDESTON, Mr. W., 2, St. John Street, Preston, Lancashire. (June, 1895).\*
- OWEN, Mr. J. A., 41, King's Road, Brighton. (April, 1895).
- PAGE, Mr. WESLEY T., F.Z.S., 6, Rylett Crescent, Shepherd's Bush, London, W. (May, 1897).
- PARKER, Mr. WM. E., Midland Hotel, Buxton. (Aug., 1900).
- PEARSON, Mr. A. A., 95, Victoria Road, Headingley, Leeds. (Nov., 1897).
- PEKHOLTZ, Mr. F., Granton Lodge, Granton Road, Edinburgh. (Dec., 1898).

- PERRING, Mr. C. S. R., 144a, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.  
(Sept., 1895).
- PERRIER, Mrs. LUMLEY, Saville House, Twickenham. (Feb., 1899).
- PHILLIPPS, Mr. R., 26, Cromwell Grove, West Kensington Park, London,  
W. (July, 1899).\*
- PHILLIPPS, Mrs. R., 26, Cromwell Grove, West Kensington Park, London,  
W. (July, 1899).
- PHILLIPPS, Mr. ALEXANDER, T. L., Port Said, Egypt. (July, 1899).
- PITT, Dr. G. NEWTON, 15, Portland Place, W. (Dec. 1894).
- PITT, Mrs., The Nest, Torquay. (Dec., 1894).
- PLOMLEY, Dr. J. F., Knightrider House, Maidstone. (Feb., 1898).
- REAY, Mr. JOHN HENRY ALFRED, 7, Rosemont, Wallington, Surrey.  
(April, 1898).
- REID, Mrs., Funchal, Madeira. (Feb., 1895).
- RICARDS, Mrs. SIDNEY, Tillingbourne, Wotton, nr. Dorking. (July, 1899).
- RICHARD, Mr. E., Hotel Metropole, Brighton. (Orig. Mem.)
- ROBERTS, Mr. NORMAN B., Ashdell Cottage, Sheffield. (Feb., 1898).
- ROBERTSON, Mrs. J. P., Bishops Tachbrook, Leamington, Warwick.  
(Jan., 1900).
- ROGERS, Miss G. COXWELL, Park Gate, Cheltenham. (Dec., 1895).
- ROTCH, Mr. CLAUDE D., 3, Beach Lawn, Waterloo, near Liverpool.  
(June, 1897).
- ROTHERA, Mr. C. L., B.A., Hazelwood, Forest Grove, Nottingham.  
(July, 1895).
- ROTHSCHILD, The Hon. W., M.P., Tring Park, Herts. (Jan., 1900).
- SALT, Dr. E. G., 50, George Square, Edinburgh. (July 1895).
- SAVAGE, Mr. A., 3, Rue Bihorel, Bihorel, Rouen, Seine Inférieure, France.  
(April, 1895).
- SAVEGE, Dr. GEORGE, 24, Railway Street, Beverley. (Oct., 1896).
- SCOTT, Mr. W. E. D., Princetown Museum, Princetown, New Jersey, U.S.A.  
(June, 1900).
- SCRIVENS, Miss, Millfield, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex. (July, 1895).
- SECRETARY, The, Natural History Society, Rugby School, Rugby.  
(Orig. Mem.)
- SERGEANT, Mr. J., 10, London Street, Southport. (Orig. Mem.).\*
- SETH-SMITH, Mr. DAVID, F.Z.S., Alleyne, Caterham, Surrey. (Dec., 1894).
- SHARP, Miss, M.D., Spring Gardens, Ringwood, Hants. (Orig. Mem.)
- SHERBROOKE, Mrs. K., Keldholme Priory, Kirkbymoorside, Yorkshire.  
(March, 1897).
- SIVEWRIGHT, Miss H. A., The Rise, Headington Hill, Oxford. (Dec., 1895).
- SLATER, Mr. ARTHUR A., Windleslaw House, St. Helens. (Nov., 1894).
- SLOANE, Mr. C. CASTLE, Oat Hall, Staplefield, Crawley, Sussex.  
(March, 1900).
- SMART, Mr. JOHN, 12, Royal Crescent, Edinburgh. (Nov., 1894).
- SMITH, Mr. H. B., Grangefield, Park Road South, Birkenhead. (June, 1895).\*
- SMITH, Mr. E. E., 133, Alderson Road, Sheffield. (Oct., 1898).
- SOPER, Mrs. GARLAND, Harestone, Caterham Valley. (Nov., 1899).
- SPEED, Mr. CHARLES, 42, Garth Road, Bangor. (Dec., 1894).
- ST. QUINTIN, Mr. W. H., Scampston Hall, Rillington, York. (Orig. Mem.).
- STANSFELD, Mr. JOHN, Dunninald, Montrose, N.B. (Dec., 1896).
- STANFORTH, Mrs., Kirk Hammerton Hall, York. (Nov., 1897).
- STEVENS, Mr. W. E., Punchbowl Hotel, Lowther Street, York. (June, 1899).

- STORY, Mr. J., 7, Blenheim Terrace, St. John's Wood, N.W. (Orig. Mem.)\*
- STURTON-JOHNSON, Miss, Ortava House, Ore, Hastings. (May, 1897).
- SWAILES, Mr. GEORGE C., Beverley, Yorks. (June, 1895).
- SWAYSLAND, Mr. WALTER, 184, Western Road, Brighton. (Orig. Mem.)\*
- SWIFT, Mr. DONALD, 58, Avenue Road, Crouch End, N. (Dec., 1898).
- SWINFEN-BROWN, Mrs. LAURA, Swinfen Hall, Lichfield. (Feb., 1898).
- TATE, Miss M. M., Allerburn, Alnwick. (May, 1900).
- TATE, Mr. ALAN, 229, Allen Street, Sheffield. (June, 1897).
- THOM, Mr. A. A., Birkacre House, Birkacre, near Chorley. (June, 1895).\*
- THOMAS, Mr. HENRY, 78, Harlow Terrace, Harrogate. (Jan., 1895).
- THOMAS, Miss, Hemsworth Rectory, Wakefield. (March, 1899).
- THOMASSET, Mr. BERNARD C., West Wickham, by Beckenham, Kent. (July, 1896).
- THOMPSON, Mrs. WALDEGRAVE, Forest Lodge, 23, Ravenscourt Park, W. (Dec., 1895).
- THOMPSON, Lady, The Knoll, Harrow-on-the-Hill, and Government House, St. Vincent. (May, 1900).
- THURSBY, Mrs., Bank Hall, Burnley. (June, 1895).\*
- TODD, Mr. R. A., Honeyden, Foot's Cray, Kent. (June, 1895).
- TOPHAM, Mr. WILLIAM, The Hill, Spondon, Derby. (Feb., 1895).\*
- TOWNEND, Mr. FRANK H., 26, Dornton Road, South Croydon, Surrey. (May, 1895).\*
- TOWNSEND, Mr. STANLEY, M., 3, Swift Street, Fulham, S.W. (Sept., 1898).
- TURNER, Mr. THOMAS, J.P., Cullompton, Devon. (Dec., 1895).
- VALENTINE, Mr. E., Highfield, Workington. (May, 1899).
- VERRALL, Mr. CLAUDE H., Johannesburg, Streatham Common, S.W. (May, 1897).
- WARD, The Hon. Mrs. SOMERSET, Isle o' Valla House, Downpatrick, Ireland. (Aug., 1897).
- WALKER, Miss H. K. O., Chesham, Bury, Lancashire. (Feb., 1895).
- WALKER, Mrs. ARTHUR, 48, Crawley Gardens, S. Kensington, S.W. (April, 1898).
- WATSON, Mr. JOHN, Wentbridge Lodge, Pontefract. (Sept., 1900).
- WEST, Miss E. E., The Homestead, Hawthorne Road, Bickley Park, Kent. (April, 1898).\*
- WHYTEHEAD, Mr. T. B., Acombe House, York. (April, 1897).
- WIENER, Mr. AUG. F., 4, Bedford Place, Russell Square, W.C. (July, 1896).
- WILDE, Miss, Little Gaddesden, Berkhamstead. (Dec., 1896).
- WILKINSON, Miss BEATRICE, End Cliffe, Manor Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. (Dec., 1894).
- WILLIAMS, Mrs. LESLIE, 8, George Street, Bathwick, Bath. (June, 1895).
- WILLIAMS, Dr. J. D., 93, Newport Road, Cardiff. (Feb., 1897).
- WINCHELSEA and NOTTINGHAM, The Dowager Countess of, Maywood, Sevenoaks, Kent. (May, 1895).
- WORDSWORTH, Miss A. M., 149, King Richards Road, Leicester. (April, 1895).
- WRIGHT, Mrs. G. J., 3, Rose Villas, Picton Road, Ramsgate. (Feb., 1898).
- WYLIE, Mr. A. C., Hillside, Woodspeen, Newbury. (Sept., 1900).
- YARBOROUGH, Mrs., Campsmount, Doncaster. (Nov., 1899).

## RULES OF THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

1.—The name of the Society shall be "THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY," and its objects shall be the study of Foreign and British Birds. Poultry, Pigeons, and Canaries shall be outside the scope of the Society.

2.—The officers of the Society shall be elected annually by the members in manner hereinafter provided, and shall consist of a President, one or more Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Secretary, an Editor, an Auditor, a Scrutineer, and a Council of twelve members. The Secretary, Editor, and Treasurer shall be *ex-officio* members of the Council.

3.—Each member shall pay an annual subscription of 10/- to be due and payable in advance on the 1st of November in each year. New members shall pay an entrance fee of 2/6. Any member whose subscription or entrance fee shall be four months overdue shall cease to be a member of the Society, and notice of his having ceased to be a member, and of the cause, shall be inserted in the Magazine.

4.—New members shall be proposed in writing; and the name and address of every person thus proposed, with the name of the member proposing him, shall be published in the next issue of the Magazine. Unless the candidate shall, within two weeks after the publication of his name in the Magazine, be objected to by at least two members, he shall be deemed to be duly elected. If five members shall lodge with the Secretary objections to any candidate he shall not be elected, but the signatures to the signed objections must be verified by the Scrutineer. If two or more members (but less than five) shall object to any candidate, the Secretary shall announce in the next number of the Magazine that such objections have been lodged (but shall not disclose the names of the objectors), and shall request the members to vote upon the question of the election of such candidate. Members shall record their votes in sealed letters addressed to the Scrutineer, and a candidate shall not be elected unless two-thirds of the votes recorded be in his favour; nor shall a candidate be elected if five or more votes be recorded against his election.

5.—The Magazine of the Society shall be issued on the first day of every month, and forwarded, post free, to each member. The Editor shall have an absolute discretion as to what matter shall be published in the Magazine (subject to the control of the Council). The Secretary and Editor shall respectively refer all matters of doubt or difficulty to the Council. The decision of the majority of the Council shall be final and conclusive in all matters.

6.—The election of officers shall take place every year between the 1st and 14th of October. All candidates must be proposed by one member and seconded by another member (in writing) before they shall be eligible for election; but this shall not apply to officers willing to stand for re-election to the same office. All such proposals which have been duly seconded must be sent to the Secretary before the 14th of September. The Secretary shall prepare a voting paper containing a list of the candidates, showing the offices for which they are respectively seeking election or re-election, and shall send a copy of such voting paper to each member of the Society with the October number of the Magazine. Each member shall make a cross (X) opposite the names of those for whom he desires to vote,



and shall sign the voting paper at the foot, and send it to the Scrutineer in a sealed envelope, before the 14th of October. The Scrutineer shall prepare a written return of the officers elected, showing the number of the votes recorded for each candidate, and send it to the Secretary before the 21st of October, for publication in the November number of the Magazine. In the event of an equality of votes, the President shall have a casting vote.

7.—It shall be lawful for the Council to delegate any of their powers to a Committee of not less than three.

8.—The Council (but not a Committee of the Council) shall have power to alter and add to the Rules, from time to time, in any manner they may think fit.

9.—The Council shall have power to expel any member from the Society at any time without assigning any reason.

10.—All members intending to resign their membership at the end of the current year of the Society shall give notice of their intention to the Secretary before the 14th of October, and all members who do not so give notice shall continue to be members for the year following, and shall be liable for their subscriptions accordingly.

11.—Neither the office of Scrutineer nor the office of Auditor shall be held for two consecutive years by the same person.

12.—The Scrutineer shall not reveal to any person how any member shall have voted.

13.—If any office shall become vacant at any time, other than at the end of the Society's year, the Council shall have power to nominate any member of the Society to fill the vacancy until the expiration of the then current year.

### THE SOCIETY'S MEDAL.

The Medal is awarded to every member who succeeds in breeding any species of bird which has not previously been known to breed in captivity in this country. Any member wishing to obtain the Medal must send a detailed account to the Secretary within eight weeks from the date of hatching of the young, and furnish such evidence of the facts as the Executive Committee may require. The Medal will be awarded only in cases where the young shall live to be old enough to feed themselves, and to be independent of their parents. The decision of the Committee shall be final.

The Medal is struck in bronze, and measures  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter. It bears on the obverse a representation of two birds with a nest containing eggs, and the words "The Avicultural Society—Founded 1894." On the reverse is the following inscription: "Awarded to (*name of donee*) for rearing young of (*name of species*) a species not previously bred in captivity in the United Kingdom."

#### *Members to whom Medals have been Awarded.*

Mr. R. A. TODD, for breeding *Poephila acuticauda* in 1897.

Mr. GEORGE E. BOUSKILL, for breeding *Cyanorhamphus auriceps* in 1897.

Mr. F. G. B. MEADE-WALDO, for breeding *Excalfactoria chinensis* in 1898.

The Rev. C. D. FARRAR, for breeding *Lagonosticta minima* in 1898.

Mr. R. PHILLIPPS, for breeding *Melanocorypha yeltoniensis* in 1899.

The Rev. C. D. FARRAR, for breeding *Cyanospiza cyanea* in 1899.

The Rev. C. D. FARRAR, for breeding *Polytelis barrabandi* in 1900.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**

BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 1.

*All rights reserved.*

NOVEMBER, 1900.

---

THE GOULDIAN FINCH.

By A. F. WIENER.

Some 20 years ago the inmates of my aviary used to vary in numbers between 300 and 500, mostly foreign finches.

My great ambition then was to obtain some living specimens of Gould's *Aegintha picta*, or painted Finch, of which I had seen a drawing and read a description in Gould's classical work on the Birds of Australia.

The greatest disappointments I had during my experience as a keeper of foreign finches were, that I never could find a specimen of Gould's painted Finch, and never meet with a copy of Gould's famous work at anything like a reasonable price. Gould's book on Australian Birds was not to be had at that time for less than sixty or eighty guineas, which would have made it a rather expensive addition to an amateur's stock of books of reference.

How very grateful we all should have been twenty-five years ago if Dr. Butler's splendid work on Foreign Finches had then existed.

At that time bird-keeping taxed the pocket of amateurs rather heavily. I remember being made to pay £10 for one of the first pairs of *Leiothrix luteus* which reached this country, whilst now the same pretty birds can be bought for a few shillings.

The search for Gould's painted finch had however the result that I came into possession of a good many rare finches which I might have overlooked if a mild mania to find a specimen of that Australian finch had not taken hold of me. To it I owe that I bought one day from a sailor in the street, four little birds which I thought might be young Gouldians imperfectly developed. When I reached home and could examine them closely, I found that they were something quite different, but further study revealed that this primary mistake had put me by accident into possession of quite a new species, which had until then been

unaccountably over-looked by all collectors and writers, and which was subsequently named *Pytelia wieneri*, and determined as of West African origin.

Last year I heard by the merest accident that somebody had received a consignment of several hundred Gouldian finches, and curiosity led me to go and see them, when I found a beautiful lot of lively birds the sight of which brought back the memory of my former vain endeavours to find Gould's painted finch, and made me forget my resolve not to resume keeping cage-birds.

Although the few Gouldian finches which I had seen at the Zoological Gardens and in private collections generally looked dull and out of condition, and I had heard and read that Gouldians were delicate, stupid, and disappointing as cage birds, I purchased two pairs, one Redheads and one Blackheads, with the object of studying the habits of these finches.

And I must say that I never had any finches which interested me more, gave me more pleasure, and proved more satisfactory cage birds.

I purposely refrained from selecting the best specimens. I just took three birds as they came to hand; and for number four I selected a rather sickly looking hen, just to see whether there would be any real difficulty in keeping her alive.

I placed them in a roomy cage, the floor of which was thickly covered with gritty sand, which they at once enjoyed to pick.

I was told that during their voyage the birds had only been fed on canary seed. I supplemented this food with spray millet, which they took greedily. Occasionally they would however, for a day or two, return to the canary seed and abstain from millet. The latter soon became their staple food; now they only eat a few grains of canary seed occasionally.

Let me repeat, however, that *millet in the ear* is the food which these birds require, and that the millet seeds sold by measure do not replace this. These stalks of millet are sold by most bird dealers at one penny each, which makes it a dear bird food. But there are several shops in London where it can be bought of excellent quality at 1/6 and 2/- the large bunch of fifty stalks.

My birds soon became so tame that, when I brought them a fresh spray of millet, they had actually to be pushed out of the way to enable me to fix it on the bars of the cage; and they sat on it and began to peck before my hand was out of the cage. As

soon as they see me bringing a new supply of millet they chirp something which sounds very much like "be quick."

The males soon began to sing, and their efforts at voice production are very funny. An apparently great effort produces but a very faint twitter, and I am inclined to call them feathered ventriloquists.

I offered my birds a bath but they would not use it at first. It was absolutely necessary to teach them to take a bath. To do this I took a vaporiser, such as is used in sick rooms to produce a fine spray of Eau de Cologne. This little machine I filled with tepid water, approached the cage slowly and sent a gentle spray of wet on the birds' backs. They evidently liked the sensation, shook their feathers, hopped from perch to perch, and gradually descended to the bottom of the cage. I followed their movements with my gentle minute stream of water directed to their backs, without ever frightening them. I continued this until they jumped on the rim of their bath, took a drink, and then jumped bodily into the bath. When they had once enjoyed the delight of a bath it required no further persuasion or teaching. They soon went into their little tub one after the other and sometimes two at a time. But they are very particular that the water is quite fresh and clean. Water which has been in the cage for some hours and has become slightly fouled they will not bathe in.

I believe however that most of the Gouldian Finches will naturally bathe without any persuasion, and the original objection of my birds to wash was only an individual peculiarity, or perhaps partly due to my habit of putting a handful of clean sand into the bath of my birds. This gives the birds a little foothold; and as they splash in the water particles of sand get into the feathers, which has a twofold advantage, it makes the birds shake themselves thoroughly afterwards, and the fine grains of sand act on the feathers something like a currycomb does on the coat of a horse. It has a distinct beneficial effect on the beauty of a bird's plumage. Watching the sparrows in the street who prefer a puddle to bathe in has taught me to try the experiment. A London sparrow knows what he is about, even when he takes a bath in what looks like dirty water.

The plumage of my Gouldians was soon in a beautiful state of perfection.

I next procured two husks of cocoa-nuts from a bird dealer, such as are used for breeding Australian Budgerigars. I fixed a husk on each side of the cage, removing one wire so

as just to leave room enough for a bird to creep through and into the cocoa nut. At first there was very great excitement amongst the birds. They pretended to be frightened, but in less than twenty-four hours female curiosity had gained the day. The hen could not refrain from peeping in, at first very little, but as nothing happened they grew bolder, put in their heads and finally went in altogether. After a few days the males followed boldly, and soon the black-headed cock had fairly taken possession of one nest, the red-headed male of the other. There was a great deal of scratching going on in the cocoanuts, but no attempt was made to form the fibres into a nest or to carry in additional material.

The black-headed male paid most attention to the red-headed hen, but when the red-headed cock tried to flirt with Miss Blackhead, the Black-headed male became very jealous. In fact Mr. Blackhead became a decided bully, and considered the cocoanuts as a kind of convenient ambush; he laid in wait there and darted out upon any bird that came near the small entrance, when he would take the bird by the nape of the neck, by a wing feather or by the tail if that came in his way, shake him well, drop him, take a mouthful of food and retire quick as lightning to the cocoanut. No harm was done, but the game looked so dangerous that I inserted a partition in my cage one day. The birds, however, did not like this and resented it by becoming dull, wherefore I took the partition out again and the birds brightened again at once; no damage ever resulted from what often looked like mortal feuds. The courtship of the red-headed cock was very gentle in comparison with the impetuosity of his black-headed cousin.

I did not expect to bring my bird number four, a black-headed hen which I had picked out because she was sickly, through the winter.

Whilst the other three birds were the picture of health and happiness and continually on the move, that poor little hen sat for hours sleepy, with her head under her feathers. But I fixed a stalk of millet always within easy reach of her favourite perch; and if she did not bathe I occasionally damped her feathers with my toy water spray apparatus. As long as we can induce a bird to eat and to keep his plumage clean there is always a chance.

Several times I thought her at death's door, and twice I picked her up from the floor of the cage more dead than alive. I found in each case that she was egg bound. Some people give whisky in such a case, others oil, but I do not much believe in

either remedy. I took about half a yard of new flannel and heated it as much as I could without burning it. Whilst the flannel was getting hot, I put the bird into a dish containing about an inch of cold water, carefully supporting her head with the hand in which I held the bird. After one or two minutes' immersion I wrapped the bird in the hot flannel, and left her undisturbed for about half-an-hour. In each case I thought I should find my bird dead on undōing the flannel wrapper, instead of which she had laid a soft egg, and seemed perfectly recovered and all right again, fit to be put back into the cage. At various times I found the shells of several perfect eggs in the cage, and do not know whether these eggs were laid by the red-headed or the sickly black-headed hen. But I believe the tyrannical, impetuous black-headed cock turned cannibal and ate those eggs as soon as they were laid, leaving me only the broken shells.

During the winter my four birds kept in very good health. Their cage stood in my sitting room. I took no special precautions as regards temperature, and the room was thoroughly aired every morning by opening the windows irrespective of the weather prevailing. I think it is a great mistake to cover a bird cage at night, and therefore never do so ; but we should be very careful so to place our bird-cages that they are never even for a moment in a draught.

About February my Gouldian finches began to moult. Their appetites remained good, and except that the black-headed cock was less aggressive and less pugnacious than formerly, there was very little change in their habits or manners. The formerly sickly hen quite recovered.

But month after month passing without the moult being completed, I came to the conclusion that there must be something wanting in the food, and that canary seed and millet were not a quite sufficient substitute for their natural food. I tried sesame seed, but the birds though occasionally picking up a grain did not care for it. Green food, such as lettuce, groundsel, watercress, etc., they would not touch or look at. During a visit to South Wales, I remembered that my Gouldians were really Grass finches and I gathered stalks of about a dozen different kinds of grass then flowering. But not one of these would my birds touch. I tried slices of apple, banana, and greengages, very ripe fruit in every case, but the Gouldians would not eat any.

A lady to whom I had presented a pair of Gouldians wrote to me that her birds were in magnificent colour and ate sugar.

As soon as I heard this I took a lump of sugar, crushed it and threw it on the sand. The first day my birds picked up some morsels but afterwards did not seem to care for any more.

I next tried a berry of a very sweet muscatel grape, and the juice of this the Gouldians drank with avidity; and thus I had at last found some dainty morsel which the birds liked.

Towards the end of July I gathered some flowers in a friend's garden, and in doing so I gathered some stalks of an ornamental grass. The thought occurred to me that my Gouldians might fancy this, and I offered them a little, which they took with great zest. When I gave more they finished every morsel, and the effect of this additional food was very remarkable. The moult finished in a couple of days, and the colouring of the plumage became brighter than I had ever seen it before.

I sent a specimen of the grass to Messrs. Sutton & Son, the eminent seed growers of Reading, who kindly supplied the botanical name, viz. *Setaria glauca*, and added the following information:—"Dr. Vasey of the U. S. A. Department of Agriculture states, in his work on the Agricultural Grasses of the United States, that the seeds of *Setaria glauca* and *Setaria viridis* are eagerly sought for by birds and poultry, especially among the stubble after harvesting wheat."

My Gouldian finches were within 3 days after tasting this seed in the most perfect plumage, and my sickly hen is as well and strong as any cage bird can be. Within 5 days both hens began to lay, and this time without any mishap or trouble whatever, and the eggs were perfectly developed and had hard shells. Soft eggs and eggbinding seem to be a thing of the past.

Certainly the black-headed Cock broke and ate the eggs again. If he were not such a beauty and such a very interesting individual to watch, I should be inclined to wring his neck or exchange him for another.

Anyhow, my two pairs of Gouldian finches purchased about a year ago are now in better health and plumage than they were when I received them, have proved to be fairly hardy and very interesting cage birds of very great beauty, and I have no doubt that it would be comparatively easy to breed any number in captivity.

As I have not at present access to a copy of Gould's work on Australian Birds I should be grateful to Dr. Butler if he would kindly say whether the birds now known as Gouldian

finches are identical with Gould's painted finch (*Aegintha picta*) or a variety of the same family? (a)

In conclusion, I may add that I used to find the beautiful Australian Fire Finch (*Aegintha phaelon*) also most difficult to keep until I purchased, one day as an experiment, a lot of sixteen exceptionally healthy specimens. To these I gave some flowering wild grass from the roadside; and I had the satisfaction of seeing this rare and delicate Australian Grassfinch nesting and hatching a brood in my aviary, which success I also attribute to having accidentally found the right sort of grass seed.

## THE SATIN BOWER-BIRD.

(*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*).

By ARTHUR G. BUTLER, Ph.D.

Why the Zoological Society has preferred to call this bird 'Silky' I do not know; for the plumage of the male when seen in a bright light is far more like satin than silk, so that there seems to be no reason for rejecting the name adopted by Gould.

Dr. Sharpe regards the Bower-birds as a sub-family of the *Timeliidæ* or Babbling-Thrushes; but in their general aspect, their somewhat ungainly actions, their love for bright articles, their nests, the long oval form and heavily blotched character of their eggs, they seem to show some affinity to the *Corvidæ*.

I purchased a young pair of this species in the green plumage on September 18th, 1899. Although many examples have at various times been acquired by our Zoological Society, I found that a pair, even of tailless young birds, was by no means to be obtained cheaply; but, though so many have come under observation, I discovered that there was still some doubt as to the manner in which the change from the young to the adult plumage took place, and the desire to study this point was an additional incentive to the acquisition of this beautiful species.

In the Museum 'Catalogue of Birds' we read that the young male "resembles the female at first, but is generally to be distinguished by a few purplish-black feathers appearing on the head and back, or on the quills. The body plumes appear to be acquired by a direct moult; but the quills and tail-feathers become black by a change in the colour of the feather itself."

---

(a) *Emblema picta* is the true name of the bird: it is figured in my book, and is quite distinct from the Gouldian finch. I placed it doubtfully among the Waxbills, but it is probably more nearly related to the Diamond Sparrow.—A.G.B.



Now, before going any further, I may say that, unless my male is in every respect exceptional, the above account is incorrect in almost every detail :—when young, the male mainly differs from the female in its superior size and more aggressive behaviour ; at first it has no black markings anywhere, but after a time these begin to appear irregularly on the crown, nape, greater wing-coverts and sides of breast.

So far as I could discover, the change of colour (which occupies just a year) was produced precisely in the opposite manner to that described in the Catalogue. Contrary to my expectation the birds did not moult in our spring ; the colouring of the male gradually spread from month to month, so slowly that, if produced by a moult of the body-feathers, they must have been shed singly. At no time was there any litter of feathers, as is the case with most birds when moulting.

About the end of July the quills and stumps of the tail-feathers began to fall out, perhaps one or two in a day, and before these were all dropped the new richly-coloured feathers began to replace those that were lost ; so that the birds were never hampered or crippled in their flight like many soft-food birds. The full colouring was not attained until near the end of September, 1900.

The adult colouring of the male Satin Bower-bird, when living, varies somewhat according to the light in which it is viewed : seen from below the prevailing colour is intense glossy black, the eyes looking almost brown ; when, however, the bird descends to the floor of the aviary the whole of the plumage, excepting the flights becomes satiny Prussian blue, the iris being of a transparent brilliant ultramarine blue. According to Gould the iris is " beautiful light blue, with a circle of red round the pupil : " possibly this may be the case in some examples, but both of my birds, as well as a pair Mr. Housden possessed, could only be properly described as having eyes of the colour of " Reckitt's Paris Blue " or ultramarine. If closely examined I daresay the red ring round the pupil exists, which would account for the brownish appearance of the eyes when the light does not fall direct upon them.

The blue-black feathers, which cover the base of the culmen and nostrils of the upper mandible, give the bill of the male a deceptively shortened appearance.

The general colouring of the female is greyish green, the rump and upper tail-coverts being brighter ; the greater and primary wing-coverts are reddish-brown, the innermost coverts

being tipped with whity-brown; the quills are dull brown, reddish externally; the secondaries are tipped with whity-brown; the tail is golden brown with the central feathers somewhat ashy; the ear-coverts and cheeks are grey-brownish streaked with yellowish; the throat ashy brown mottled with greenish; under parts otherwise yellowish, varied on the breast with deep brown bars which become indistinct on the front of the abdomen and gradually disappear; under wing-coverts yellow, with dusky bars, axillaries greener.

According to Gould the irides of the female are of a deeper blue than in the male: but I am unable to endorse this statement, for I can discover no difference in the eyes of the two sexes.

Of the wild life of this bird Gould writes: "It is a stationary species, but appears to roam from one part of a district to another, either for the purpose of varying the nature, or of obtaining a more abundant supply of food. Judging from the contents of the stomachs of the many specimens I dissected, it would seem that it is altogether frugivorous, or if not exclusively so, that insects form but a small portion of its diet. Independently of numerous berry-bearing plants and shrubs, the brushes it inhabits are studded with enormous fig-trees, to the fruit of which it is especially partial. It appears to have particular times in the day for feeding, and when thus engaged among the low shrub-like trees, I have approached within a few feet without creating alarm; but at other times the bird was extremely shy and watchful, especially the old males, which not unfrequently perch on the topmost branch or dead limb of the loftiest tree in the forest, whence they can survey all around, and watch the movements of their females and young in the brush below.

"In the autumn they associate in small flocks, and may often be seen on the ground near the sides of rivers, particularly where the brush descends in a steep bank to the water's edge.

"The extraordinary bower-like structure . . . first came under my notice in the Sydney Museum. . . This so much interested me that I determined to leave no means untried for ascertaining every particular relating to this peculiar feature in the bird's economy; and on visiting the cedar-brushes of the Liverpool range, I discovered several of these bowers or playing-places on the ground, under the shelter of the branches of overhanging trees, in the most retired part of the forest: they differed considerably in size, some being a third larger than others.

The base consists of an extensive and rather convex platform of sticks firmly interwoven, on the centre of which the bower itself is built: this, like the platform on which it is placed, and with which it is interwoven, is formed of sticks and twigs, but of a more slender and flexible description, the tips of the twigs being so arranged as to curve inwards and nearly meet at the top: in the interior the materials are so placed that the forks of the twigs are always presented outwards, by which arrangement not the slightest obstruction is offered to the passage of the birds. The interest of this curious bower is much enhanced by the manner in which it is decorated with the most gaily coloured articles that can be collected, such as the blue tail-feathers of the Rose-hill and Pennantian Parrakeets, bleached bones, the shells of snails, etc.; some of the feathers are inserted among the twigs, while others with the bones and shells are strewn about near the entrances. The propensity of these birds to fly off with any attractive object, is so well-known to the natives, that they always search the ruins for any small missing article that may have been accidentally dropped in the brush. I myself found at the entrance of one of them a small neatly-worked stone tomahawk, of an inch and a half in length, together with some slips of blue cotton rags, which the birds had doubtless picked up at a deserted encampment of the natives.

“It has now been clearly ascertained that these curious bowers are merely sporting-places in which the sexes meet, and the males display their finery and exhibit many remarkable actions, and so inherent is this habit, that the living examples, which have from time to time been sent to this country, continue it even in captivity.”

Mr. Gould never discovered the nest and eggs: the latter were first described by Dr. Ramsay from specimens collected by Mr. Ralph Hargrave, at Wattamolla, New South Wales.

The nest is composed of sticks and twigs, and is lined with grass. The number of eggs appears to be two, long ovals of a rich cream or pale stone-colour, “spotted and blotched with irregular patchy markings, and a few dots of umber and sienna-brown of different tints, in some almost approaching blackish-brown, in others of a yellowish colour; the larger markings are as usual on the thicker end, but a few appear with the small dots on the thin end. In this, the usual form, the irregular, short wavy lines”(—“some resembling ill-shaped figures of fives, eights, and sevens, others being long and wavy”—),

"seldom appear except where the larger spots or blotches are confluent; as if beneath the surface of the shell are a few irregular shaped, faint markings of slaty grey or pale lilac."

The Satin Bower-bird inhabits New South Wales, and ranges throughout Eastern Australia to Rockingham Bay and Port Denison.

Of the notes of the bird little has been written, but Gould quotes the following remarks from a letter which he received from a Mr. F. Strange :—

"At times the male will chase the female all over the aviary, then go to the bower, pick up a gay feather or a large leaf, utter a curious kind of note, set up his feathers erect, run round the bower, and become so excited that his eyes appear ready to start from his head, and he continues opening first one wing and then the other, uttering a low whistling note, and, like the domestic Cock, seems to be picking up something from the ground, until at last the female goes gently towards him, when, after two turns round her, he suddenly makes a dash, and the scene ends."

In the case of my birds, to which I have devoted a small aviary, no bower has been built, although I supplied plenty of sticks; probably because the male was only assuming its adult plumage. He however constantly sings to the hen, puffs out his feathers, arches his back, alternately opens and shuts one wing or the other, flies round with a dropped quill-feather in his beak and once he so alarmed his wife that she turned on her back, on the earth with open beak and claws up to defend herself. My man came running to me crying—"He's done it, I said he would; he's killed her!" and certainly it looked like it until I went inside the aviary, when she was up and off to her favourite roost in a second.

The song is a most comical performance, and resembles nothing so much as water, containing bits of cabbage-leaf, running down a sink, and interspersed here and there with clear Starling-like notes: the alarm note is a jarring monosyllable most like the word *scoot* with a very rough hesitation on the *c*. As this species is particularly nervous and excitable the alarm-note is often heard.

It is difficult to express the sounds of the song in words, but the idea it conveys to the mind is a rapid *whozzle-whozzle-whozzle-sgrrrr*, with variations.

I feed my birds upon a mixture of two parts crumb of stale

household bread, one part each of yolk of egg and ants' eggs, and a little Abrahams' food; sometimes I add a little fine pea-flour. I moisten this either with a sprinkling of water or an admixture of potato. I also give grapes, orange, apple and sometimes pear; but the last is hardly ever eaten.

Gould was certainly wrong in supposing that this species was almost, if not altogether, frugivorous; for insects of all kinds are eaten with the greatest avidity, and my birds will swallow cockroaches as long as I can supply them, gulping them down whole one after another.

## HODGSON'S FRUITSUCKER.

(*Chloropsis hodgsoni*.)

By H. C. HESELTON.

This is a handsome bird, a native of S.E. India, and a member of a species rarely imported (I found it very delicate to bring over) but which, when here and properly looked after, is much hardier and easier to cater for than many less rare birds.

The plumage of body, wings and tail is a bright grass green; the inner web of principal wing-feathers being nearly black; the whole of the plumage being well glossed; a dark yellow patch on forehead tinged with orange at base of bill; throat a bright metallic blue, this colour forming a bib meeting in the centre, not like the Malabar, one of which I have, the blue in the latter being a stripe on each side of the mouth. The blue bib of *Hodgsoni* is followed by another of black extending well down on the breast and edged by a pale yellow border which fades into the body colour of green. Beak blackish and slightly curved; feet and legs blue-green. There is a small patch of very light blue on the extreme part of wing-butts but this cannot be seen unless the wings are extended.

This bird seems to be purely arboreal. I have never seen it on the floor of my aviary, its food and water being placed amongst the branches of the tree. The food consists of a few ants' eggs, fruit, and about twelve mealworms per day; the worms are preferred when they have just cast their skins, being soft, but not soft enough evidently as the bird beats them against its perch, runs them thro' its beak several times, throws them in the air, catches and swallows them. It is fond of bananas, plums, and soft pears, and I make these the "base" food. It drinks or rather sips by putting its long tongue in the water, and bathes every day.

The song is bright and cheerful though not of extended compass ; the call notes seem to be two, one a harsh note something like that of the Shāma, the other a very fine loud whistle.

It is extremely tame, feeding from my hand although it is in a cage 8ft. square.

I am not acquainted with the district from which these birds are brought, but think it must be a fairly temperate one, as the plumage is thick, and whilst always throwing a few downy feathers, the bird always looks like paint and does not seem to mind a little cold weather. When I bought it it was in its nest-feathers, and all the colours and markings were dull and indistinct.

## BREEDING OF THE MALABAR MYNAH.

By the Rev. C. D. FARRAR.

Some of the readers of the "Avicultural Magazine" may remember how, about two years ago (1898), I was successful in getting a pair of Malabar Mynahs to make two nests and to lay two lots of eggs in succession ; but although they sat steadily and did all in their power to hatch those eggs, still being unfertile, the task proved hopeless ; although it called out much patience and persistent effort. Whose fault it was I cannot say, as both birds seemed in perfect health and condition ; but so it was, those eggs refused to hatch, and at last even the patience of the Malabars, or, as a neighbour's poultryman will call them (with a fine disregard to correctness) 'Balamars,' was exhausted and they gave up the case as a bad job. At the end of the season I sold them to my friend 'Balar,' but during the next winter he lost them both : from want, I think, of sufficient live food.

For a year I remained without any Malabars ; but one day this summer I was looking at a friend's aviary at York, and he happened to have an odd Malabar, the finest cock, I think, I ever set eyes on—quite a monster. He had once belonged to Mr. Fulljames, but, on the disposal of his birds, had emigrated North. After a little bargaining I got him transferred to myself ; and after seeing him comfortably settled in his new home, and, on the principle that neither for Starlings nor man is it 'good to be alone,' I wrote to London and procured him a mate. His joy on seeing her was pathetic. She, I must say, seemed (or pretended to seem) coy and amazed at his bold demonstrative ways. There was no mistaking that he was a disciple of Herrick, as he gaily warbled

Come, live with me and be my love,  
And we will all its pleasures prove.

After a few days she consented and came.

I think there can be no doubt that Malabar Mynahs, like all Starlings, are red Republicans : their sober and Quaker-like garb reminds one instantly of one of Cromwell's preachers. And one could quite imagine one addressing the other as 'Praise God Barebones,' or 'Smite-them-hip-and-thigh Amalek.' Sober in mind as in apparel, he sets his face steadfastly against 'all the poms and vanities of this wicked world'—the quarrels of Crimson-finches; the absurd dancing of Waxbills; the gaudy appearance of Blue Mountain Lories. He holds that life is a struggle; he believes that Starlings, like men, are 'born to labour,' and that the whole duty of Mynahs is worms. The Malabar, therefore, cannot be brought to see the utility of a Manycolour's wing patch; the fat aldermanic deportment of the apoplectic Diamond Sparrow; and has no patience with the silly habit of the Mocking-bird, who spends his freedom in tuning his voice. For a Turquoise father, with a rising family, he has some respect; but for a frivolous little Zosterops, well, he can't, for the life of him, see why such silly things were made. He holds, with apologies to the author of 'Farm Ballads':

Some birds were born for great things;  
Some birds were born for small;  
Some—it is not recorded  
Why they were born at all.

The Malabar Mynah believes fully in leading a righteous and sober life. He rises early, late takes rest, and eats the bread of carefulness. He is the first to rise in the morning, and the last to go to bed at night. He and his missus remind me of a Dutch burgher and his frau: they are well though soberly dressed; well fed, of grave deportment, and so respectable that scandal hesitates to whisper their name. They seem to say what the Shunamite said to Elisha: 'I dwell among mine own people.' They never meddle with what does not concern them; and herein set us humans a good example.

My Malabars were not long over their courting; they evidently, like our American cousins, hold with 'no blamed foolishness' of that kind. Mrs. Malabar soon said 'Yes,' and then she evidently meant business. 'The wife is heart or head,' as Josh Billings silyly says somewhere, and we (who have tried it) all know how persuasive the wife is—especially when she wants something. Well, Mrs. Malabar wanted a family, and she set about having it.

Mr. Malabar evidently believed in the words of the immortal Josh when he says, 'Whenever i find a real hansum wuman engaged in a wimmin's rights bizzness, then i am goin' to take mi hat under mi arm and jine the procession.' So Master Mynah 'jined.'

The amount of hay these birds conveyed into their nesting box would surprise you. They worked early and late. The lining was most peculiar, for it consisted of dry box-leaves. Malabars, like sailors, take watch and watch about. I never can make out whether they come off at any stated time, or when the spirit moves them; I think the latter. When off duty the gentleman spends his time sitting on a bough, and tuning up: I believe he thinks he can sing.

You hear a sound that seems to wear  
The semblance of a tune,  
As if a broken fife should strive  
To drown a cracked bassoon.

Occasionally he visits the nest and pops in his head carefully, and asks the missus how she is getting on. What the answer is I do not know; but something short and uncomplimentary, I fancy, by the rapid way he withdraws his head.

The lady, when off duty, has a sober eye to business. First she attends to the cravings of the inner man, and then, like all ladies, she spends a few hours at her toilet. Then suddenly she bethinks her that it is time to go and see what that idiot of a husband is up to; and she goes—and he comes, and makes no silly delay about it.

On the morning of Wednesday, August 15th, when I went in to feed, I found sundry blue egg-shells on the floor, so that I knew that the family had arrived. For the first few days the Malabars fed the young from the crop, as I particularly watched to see, for they swallowed everything they picked up; but, on Thursday, August 17th, I saw them begin to carry the live stock in their bills, after thoroughly beating the life out of it on the window sill. What silly twaddle it is to tell people that they must always kill the mealworms before giving them to the birds! Bless me, old Mother Nature has taught them what to do themselves, and they do it; if learned scientists will only observe them, instead of trying to teach them.

The excreta are carried out by the old birds, after about the second day; until then, I suppose, they are either too insignificant to do any harm, or the old birds swallow them. They always carry them to the very farthest point they can, and



then whittle their beaks on a bough, like a butcher sharpening his knife, before he cuts you off a steak or a chop.

When going to feed, there is a regular system of signals: a sort of 'Hullo, my dear, I'm here, are you quite ready?' Sometimes the lady is not, and she takes no notice. Then Mr. Malabar grows impatient. 'Hullo,' he says, 'hullo, hullo-o-o!' and when he gets like this, she comes—and in he pops. The way they limb the poor cockroaches is a caution to rattlesnakes. No doubt young Malabars appreciate 'cockroach chops,' or 'clock trotters,' but think of the feelings of the poor clock, as he is scientifically chipped to pieces. I have seen them remove one leg at a time, leaving the poor wretch after each amputation to carry his leg to the nest; but there, I won't be horrid, you can picture the rest—Leeds Infirmary, on 'Operating Day,' is not in it.

Now let me say a word on rearing such birds as Malabar Starlings. I have read in 'Cassell's Foreign Cage Birds' that Mr. Wiener professes to have reared some Malabars on *ordinary soft mixtures*, which he buried in mould and made the birds search for it, and a *few* mealworms and spiders occasionally, and a little chopped raw meat. I do not wish to say that the account is apocryphal (*b*), but shall we say it is to be taken *cum grano*? I say so for the following reasons (1) I have tried chopped meat, just for curiosity; they would not so much as look at it, let alone eat it. (2) They would not eat the ordinary soft mixture *themselves*, let alone feed with it.

Now let me tell you a true story of what it takes to rear a nest of Malabars. I watched the old birds feeding, and during *fifteen minutes* they alternately visited the nest ten times between them. They took each time *thirty* fresh wood ants' eggs *each*, or two big mealworms, or a mashed-up black clock. This went on from dawn until dusk; forty visits an hour for ten hours equals four hundred. Say each time they took thirty ants' eggs or their equivalent, it means twelve thousand per diem. Now can you credit that anyone reared young on *soft food*, a little chopped raw beef, a *few* mealworms and spiders *occasionally*? Maybe, I say, your 'cargo hatch' will hold it; mine won't. And this, bear in mind, goes on for weeks and weeks. No one who has not tried, knows what it means to rear a nest of such birds as Malabars.

The young Malabars left the nest on Sunday, September 2nd, on the principle, I suppose, that 'the better the day the

---

(b) If Mr. Farrar impugns the veracity of his fellow aviculturists, let him beware lest his word be doubted.—A.G.B.

better the deed.' There were four of them, all lusty and strong. For a few days they perched about, but soon learned to fly any where. In appearance they are nearly *white* about the *head* and *breast*, and ashy-grey-brown on the back, beaks nearly white, eyes grey-blue with black centre.

The other day, in looking over a back number of the Magazine, I learned that my cock Malabar was a noted Palace winner, spoken of there by Dr. Butler as a capital specimen. He adds the scathing comment, 'I prefer Mr. Housden's Crested Mynah, rarer and far more intelligent.' Has Dr. Butler ever kept a Malabar Mynah? (c) Few birds I know can beat Malabars for *noûs*.

And now I think I had better draw to a close, or else you will be saying that there's a lot of truth in the old saw—

The Magpie can talk for a terrible span,  
And so, by gow, can a Yorkshireman.

## THE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL FOREIGN BIRDS IN WINTER.

By A. F. WIENER.

The season is now beginning which too often brings many disappointments to owners of the prettiest small exotic finches, because it brings death to so many. A few hints how to minimise the mortality in winter, may therefore be useful and welcome to some readers of the Magazine.

My aviary at Herne Hill was heated by hot water pipes. It was divided into compartments of about 12ft. long by 6ft. wide and 8ft. high. The floor of these was raised 2ft. above the level of the passage which led through the aviary. Each compartment had a small fountain, was furnished with some evergreen shrubs in pots, and numerous perches of many kinds. The food I used to give in white china dishes placed on the sanded cement floor.

I was always careful not to crowd my cages with too many birds, and to locate quarrelsome species apart from the small exotic finches, Waxbills, etc., which were my special favourites.

With the advent of the first winter the mortality among my birds became very considerable. Every morning I found a

(c) Dr. Butler has kept a Malabar Mynah, a very fine male, and he paid just one-sixth as much for it as he did for his Crested Mynah: it is common, but not regularly imported, probably because there is no great demand for it.—A.G.B.

number of my little birds dead on the floor. I thought the heat of between 50 and 55° F., which my self-registering thermometer indicated as minimum, had been insufficient. The boiler was thereupon driven to its utmost capacity and the temperature raised a few degrees, but that did not in the least diminish the mortality. I could not understand why birds, which were perfectly well one day, should be found dead the next morning in perfect plumage. When I began to dissect the dead bodies I soon found the cause, and a little reflection pointed out the remedy.

The crops of my dead pets were invariably empty: they evidently had died from exhaustion and hunger in an aviary with plenty of food in view. A visit to my aviary at dawn confirmed what I suspected. When the birds woke up hungry, the stronger ones took possession of the food dishes and drove away the weaker and smaller kinds. The latter came to grief, not from cold, but from want of sufficient food during the very long nights of a London winter.

All birds digest and assimilate their food very rapidly. Finches of the size of a Canary cannot survive want of food for twenty-four hours. I found that the smaller a bird is, the greater becomes the amount of food he requires in proportion to his own weight to sustain life and strength. No cage bird, at least no finch, feeds in the dark. The small exotic finches coming from the Tropics, where all the year round the length of the night does not vary very much, their organism could endure a fast of about twelve hours, but not a London December night of sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen hours.

Thereupon I purchased as many petroleum lamps with tin reflectors as I had compartments in my aviary containing small exotic birds. These lamps I placed outside the cages in such a position that the light was thrown all night on the food-dishes, whilst the favourite sleeping-perches of the birds were near the roof and to some extent in the shade. After this, when a bird felt hungry at night, he saw where food could be found, flew down, had a good feed, and returned to his sleeping-place in the shade.

This very simple arrangement arrested the mortality in a very remarkable manner, and from that day I had practically no losses (*d*). I had even the pleasure of seeing a pair of Brazilian

---

(*d*) I have also found this plan, if not essential, at all events most beautiful to our British summer migrants, especially by the soft-billed species.—J.L.B.

Saffron-finches hatching a brood at Christmas, and bringing it up, without any mishap, in the early days of January.

I had no further anxiety about the temperature of my aviary. On the principle that even in tropical countries there are sometimes cold nights, I was quite unconcerned if the thermometer fell during great frost to 45° or 40°, and never lost any birds from cold.

Years afterwards, I was living in France and kept half-a-dozen delicate Waxbills in a cage in my sitting-room. This was lighted by shaded lamps. At ten every evening the shade from the lamp was moved for a time, when my little birds woke up and had their supper. When they had eaten enough, the shade was replaced, and my little birds went to sleep again. I kept half-a-dozen birds during several years without losing one, and all the time in perfect condition.

Canaries and finches of the size of Canaries can, as a rule, endure the long fast consequent on our long winter nights, but the smaller finches and Waxbills cannot, and that is the chief cause of their mortality which can very easily be avoided.

Covering up birdcages is a very great mistake. Every bird requires his food as soon as there is sufficient daylight to find it, and, if then covered up and thereby kept in the dark, is practically starved. Some individual birds do not like artificial light: in such cases a small piece of paper or any other material may be used just to shade a little the spot where the bird habitually perches at night.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### "THE LONG-TAILED GRASSFINCH."

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Seth-Smith's article on the Long-tailed Grassfinch (*P. acuticauda*) may I be allowed to say that, in Germany, the difference of colour in the bill is believed to denote two distinct species.

According to "Die Gefiederte Welt," No. 34 of the current year, 1900, it is stated that the Long-tailed Grassfinches, with what Mr. Seth-Smith calls reddish orange beaks, are *Poephila heeki*; those with yellow beaks *Poephila acuticauda*. The difference between the two distinct species has only lately been ascertained. The article in question mentions that even Dr. Russ himself believed the yellow-beaked variety to be identical with the reddish-orange-beaked birds, and that the darker coloured denoted adult plumage. Since his death it has been proved that two distinct varieties exist. "Die Gefiederte Welt" is of such undoubted authority in ornithological matters that I venture to quote this information.

C. A. HODGSON.

### SHAMA WITHOUT TAIL.

SIR,—I have a Shama which has no tail. Upon examination, I find there are no signs of tail-feathers coming. Is this usual in this kind of bird?

Can you advise any treatment likely to cause the growth of tail-feathers? as it makes him very unsightly. I have had him a month, and he is quite healthy and sings well. I feed him on Carl Capelle's insectivorous food, ants' eggs, a few mealworms, and a liberal supply of gentles. He does not seem to care for fruit.

ARTHUR GILL.

*The following reply was sent to Mr. Gill :*

You can encourage the reproduction of feathers by giving phosphates in the drinking-water—eight drops daily of syrup of phosphates to a wine-glassful of water.

It is not natural for a Shama to be without a tail; but, if knocked out soon after it has been produced, a tail is frequently a long time before it reappears. My Satin Bower-birds were tailless for about nine months, but now they are both perfect.

A. G. BUTLER.

### PROPOSED AVIARY FOR WEAVERS.

SIR,—Will you please let me know, by post, the following questions, viz. : 1st. Would 60 ft. long by 24 ft. broad be too large to keep Weavers in? 2nd. How many would it hold? 3rd. What are the best shrubs to put in; would honeysuckle hurt the birds? 4th. Would it be best to turf and gravel the outer run, or cement? 5th. What height should it be? 6th. If too large for Weavers only, what could I keep with same?

C. CASTLE-SLOANE.

*The following reply has been sent to Mr. Sloane :*

An aviary can hardly be too large, if you desire to breed Weavers. In such an aviary as you speak of it would be possible to keep upwards of fourteen hundred Weavers in health, but there would then be no possibility of breeding, which (after all) is one of the most interesting features of aviculture.

I do not think honeysuckle would hurt the birds, but they would remove it all in a day or two : I should recommend you to cut a quantity of reeds, bind them in bundles—towards the bottom of the stems—and stack them upright at one end of the aviary, so as to simulate a reed-bed : it is then quite likely that you would breed the more beautiful reed-frequenting Weavers.

The advantage of cement is that it keeps out rats : for this reason the floors of all my aviaries are cemented. I would not recommend living shrubs, because no finches will allow shrubs to live long unless the area is very extensive and the birds comparatively few in number. If you think of breeding, I should recommend one cock and several hens of each species to begin with. Of course you would include the smaller Whydahs.

I should not recommend that the aviary be more than ten feet high : it is difficult to catch birds in very lofty aviaries.

A. G. BUTLER.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**  
BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 2.

*All rights reserved.*

DECEMBER, 1900.

---

THE L. AND P. O. SHOW,  
AND SOME THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY WHAT  
I SAW THERE.

By REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

I invariably make a special effort to attend the London and Provincial Ornithological Society's Annual Exhibitions of Birds, for they are always, I think, held from a Tuesday to Thursday, thereby saving unnecessary Sunday labour. This year was no exception, the Exhibition taking place at the Crystal Palace on October 30 and 31 and November 1. I paid my visit in the forenoon on the Wednesday.

The collection of foreign birds (there were also British birds and Canaries) was not a large one, the withdrawal of Mr. Fulljames from the show bench making a marked difference in the number of the exhibits. Nevertheless, there was a very nice little Show, placed in a snug place free from draughts, and part, but not all, in good light.

Most of the exhibits were humanely caged (I inspected only the foreign birds, and classes 51 and 53 of the British), but I must except No. 2 in class 53, a fair Missel Thrush in a regulation show cage so shallow that it could not but be restless, and it could not flutter backwards and forwards without bruising its flights. Can an exhibitor suppose that any judge would award a prize to a bird in such a condition! Not only is it larger, but the Missel Thrush is a much more nervous and restless species than the Song Thrush, and requires a respectable cage.

A few birds, not marked absent, I could not find; and an empty cage was a pathetic epitaph in one instance; and plurals in the catalogue were sometimes represented by single specimens. Let us hope that the latter were but printer's errors, of which there were sufficient, such as "Lui" for "Tui," "Lanceolated" for "Lineolated," "Blue-pointed" for "Blue-fronted," etc.

Two absurdities attracted my attention. (1) A pair of Paradise Whydahs in a cage suitable perhaps for the two birds in undress, but which the male in full fig. found highly inconvenient for the decorous handling of his full court train ; (2) A House Sparrow, which a gentleman with a Scotch name, presumably from some out of the way place in the Highlands or Islands, sent up so that we poor Londoners might have a chance of seeing *Passer domesticus* for once in our lives.

The judge (foreign birds) was scarcely happy in some of his awards.

Amongst the British birds ("Migratory.—Any Variety," and "Any other Variety British Bird."), perhaps two fine Choughs attracted most attention, but one unhappily had injured his bill. These birds are most diligent hunters after insects in crevices and under stones on the sea shore, turning the stones over and groping about amongst them in a most industrious manner, the long, curved, very fine, narrow bill being specially adapted for the purpose. Not but what they will accompany the ploughman like a Rook when unmolested. The injured bird had evidently been following his instincts in captivity to his own undoing. A male Chough (the female is often shy and timid) with semi-liberty makes a grand pet, but is out of place and thrown away in a cage.

Mr. Maxwell exhibited a superb Wryneck ; but the poor fellow, standing as bolt upright on his bare perch as a scared Scops Owl, did look so absurdly conscious of his incongruous surroundings ! He would have given the best feather in his tail for twelve inches of apple-tree sprout. A specimen each of the Greater and Lesser Black-spotted Woodpeckers were interesting, the latter being not often seen at the Shows. Mr. Maxwell's Black Redstart was hardly in good form. I failed to see his Blue-headed Wagtail which took the second prize. More than once, when visiting a Show in the morning, I have noticed special birds carried off to a quiet corner in order to be sketched or painted. This is most unfair, and ought not to be allowed. We pay our money, come a considerable railway journey, and put ourselves to much inconvenience in order to see the birds, and especially the special birds, and no bird should be moved from its place during show hours except on account of sickness. I do not say that this particular exhibit had been removed for the purpose suggested because I do not know. A good Grey Wagtail was shewn by Mr. Allen. Mr. Wilson had a nice, though small, Missel Thrush : and a Grasshopper

Warbler (a bird of the year I think) sent by Mr. Sandy, and a Lesser Whitethroat by Mr. Davison, were not without merit taking the species into consideration.

Two good Nightingales stirred up the muse in the heart of a gentleman near, perhaps a foreigner as I had difficulty in following his speech, who told me (as I understood him) that Nightingales on migration used to pass over his garden but not stop there. One year he had a caged Nightingale in his garden; and two pairs of wild birds, attracted by the captive, instead of passing on as in previous years, stopped for the season and nested with him. Some country gentlemen may like to take the hint. Mr. Plumbridge's Jay, a good bird but dull of feather, called out another story. A passenger, passing a caged Jay on board ship, gave a violent sneeze. On the following day the gentleman's wife passed the bird, when it likewise began to sneeze. In truth our Jay, although a poor talker, is a splendid mimic. One fine Magpie, and another smaller, were also present.

So far as the foreigners were concerned, not much attention was paid to the class in which a bird was found. On this point we can sympathize with Show Managers—so long as the mistakes are made by mistake, which is not always the case. But still it was necessary to make just one example, and thus to uphold the principle of the thing, and accordingly a scapegoat was found in the person of a Shining Parrakeet—which was *not* in its wrong class. But here I can sympathize with the judge also, who, as indignant as myself, could think of no better way of inflicting punishment on its owner. I found the poor bird hanging on by its eyelids to a slippery, ungraduated, much too large bamboo perch, and afraid to wink for fear it might tumble off backwards. If it was not the perch that made it look so miserable, I can only suppose that it was troubled with a bad "tummy-ache" when I passed by. Besides, to have accepted the Shining Parrakeet would have been to have condemned Mr. Sutton's two excellent Fijians which were in another class. And so it came to pass that Mr. Sutton was rewarded with second and third prizes for sending up two good birds, and Mr. Cole condemned in costs and a Wg. Cl. for sending up a less excellent example:—really an admirable system to work upon.

In class 55 there were but five exhibits, amongst which were distributed four prizes and a V.H.C. This is reducing prize-giving to an absurdity. Might not some kind of sliding scale be arranged, so that the number of prizes might bear some pro-



portion to the number of entries, or of cages present on the judging day? To make the matter more ridiculous in this case, the first prize was awarded to a bird which had no business in the class, for a Lineolated Parrakeet is not a Pigmy Parrot. Although not exactly common in this country, for there is little demand for it, it is not a rare species; and this bird at its best could not have been a first class specimen:—when I passed it, it appeared to be approaching its worst. In this class there seemed to be a good pair of Rosy Lovebirds, but I could hardly see them in their dark but otherwise comfortable cage. The rest of the class was filled up with Budgerigars.

Mr. Le Grace exhibited a couple of good Tui Parrakeets, a most engaging species to my mind. An old male we have had for some years will sit just out of my reach, and mock, and cheek, and almost make faces at me like some impudent young scamp who knows his parents are too effeminate to give him the wallowing he so richly deserves. But when a good boy, or in any trouble, he will come on to my little finger, the only one he can comfortably grasp with his tiny paws, and allow us to kiss and caress him as placidly as if he were a kitten, puppy, or baby. I tried very hard to persuade myself that Mr. Le Grace's birds were a pair, but was not successful. A very good female Golden-shouldered Parrakeet was shewn by Mr. Hawkins; probably it was the rarest bird in the Show.

The Lories and Lorikeets had but one representative between them. Mr. Maxwell's Scaly-breasted Lorikeet was a very lively healthy bird, but in unusually poor colour. From what I know of the species, I feel inclined to associate this loss of colour with moulting on seed; and this bird had nothing but seed in its cage when I saw it. One would like to know something more of its history. Mrs. Doherty exhibited a nice Red-winged Parrakeet, and another was sent up by Mr. Sutton. Mr. Hawkins' Turquoise seemed to be in good feather; but Mr. Housden's excellent pair of Pennants and Mr. Maxwell's well known Hawk-headed Parrot seemed a trifle stale. A very lively White-browed Amazon, owned by Mrs. Cooper, helped to cheer up its companions; but it should not have been ignored by the judge just because it was a little woman in female attire but, alas, it also had a woman's tongue, so of course he passed it with all speed.

One lady valued her very ordinary-looking Blue-fronted Amazon at £500 (so the catalogue); but the judge did not notice the bird, which of course shewed very bad taste on the

part of the judge. This is supposed to have shamed the lady so much that I was told she tore the price off the label. Or did the bird, with a more modest idea of its own value, itself gnaw it off! Mr. Housden had a good female Ganga and a capital pair of Leadbeater's Cockatoos, and Mrs. Cooper had a fair male Leadbeater.

Last but hardly least come the three Fijian Parrakeets, to which I have already indirectly alluded. On previous occasions we have had examples of two, but not I think of three, different species of these large but, in captivity, not very interesting birds. Exhibitions are of great value to aviculturists, as by them they are enabled to see and compare species which otherwise would be beyond their reach; and I must be forgiven if I let out at those who by thoughtlessness bring the Shows into disrepute. I made out Mr. Sutton's second-prize bird to be a Tabuan Parrakeet, *Pyrrhulopsis tabuensis*, his other bird a Masked Parrakeet, *P. personata*, and Mr. Cole's to be, as catalogued, a Shining Parrakeet, *P. splendens*.

Most of the foreigners other than Parrots were most properly placed in cages with wooden backs, which caused some of them to be so much in the shade that I could hardly make them out, much less observe their points. For instance, Mr. Hawkins' pair of Rufous-tailed Finches, which took the first prize in the open class for Waxbills, Whydahs, etc., looked to me much like two males. To this class Mr. Hawkins sent also a Red-faced, an Aurora, and a pair of Pectoral Finches. Mr. Glasscoe had a pair of what seemed to be Golden-fronted Weavers, and a Yellow-backed Whydah; Mrs. Cooper a Red-headed Weaver and a pair of Magpie Mannikins; and Mr. Townsend a pair of Zebra Waxbills. What seemed to be a pair of ordinary Combasous were catalogued as "Paradise Whydah (E. African variety)."

My first sight of the next class was enough to break the heart of a wheelbarrow, much more so mine, for I am very fond of the Parrot Finches. A solitary specimen seemed to be deeply lamenting a lost one, and a hybrid (Vol. VI., p. 136) next to it was likewise alone, although the catalogue speaks of "finches," and the only Report on the Show I have seen refers to both as "pairs"; the pair of Tricoloured had vanished, taking their cage with them; while a 2nd prize Parrot Finch in the Limit Class was represented by a tenantless cage. It is impossible to help liking these little fellows, but they are not over robust. All these birds belonged to Mr. Hawkins (who took the whole of the

money in this class), and also a lovely pair of Beautiful and a good pair of Long-tailed Grassfinches, and a rather lumpy female Cuba Finch. Mrs. Gill exhibited a pair of Passerine Doves and another of Chinese Quails. There were also in the class several foreign Goldfinches, a good pair of Zebras, and a Green Singing-finch. I did not see any of Mr. H. B. Smith's cages in this or any other class.

The first prize in the Insectivorous, Any Variety, Class was taken by Mr. Glasscoe's excellent Masked Wood-Swallow, which looked as much like a fish out of water as the Wryneck; but his Blue-cheeked Barbet, a fine male in rather poor colour, looked as impudent as you like, and from his very cheeky look attracted the attention of several visitors. This species lives on fruit and berries; but the bird had to be shoved either into this or the class for seed-eaters. The two Zosterops sent up by the same gentleman, of different species as I believe, were caged together, and properly passed by the Judge. Mr. Townsend carried off the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th prizes with his Tanagers—Blue and Black, and Blue-headed. He had also a Black Tanager.

In the Limit Class, Mr. Hawkins came first with a first-class male Rufous-tailed Finch, and third with a fair pair of Bicheno's, and fourth with a pair of Lavenders. He and other exhibitors had likewise several birds of no particular merit, but I must except Mr. Housden's Dominicans, which looked like good birds.

As regards the Lavender Finches, the female was of the light colour which in recent years we have been taught to believe denotes the female, but which it seems to me denotes only immaturity of either sex. For some years past I have been trying to obtain an undoubted female; but all the light coloured warranted females have turned as black as Crows when fully adult. I fear that the females, being the more delicate, rarely survive, and that most of the Lavenders we meet with are males. The nearest approach to a female which I have been able to obtain is now as black about the hind quarters as its mate; but it is worthy of note that when it is handled twice a year on the occasions of its transfers between its winter and summer abodes it is found that it never has any flank spots, which the male as often possesses. The light coloured flank theory took its origin from a drawing which Mr. Abrahams caused to be made of an example in his possession which a *post mortem* examination proved to be a female; but I strongly suspect that if the bird had lived it would have turned as black as the others. I think

that it is the slightly lighter colour of the general plumage, but especially of the fore rather than the hind parts, that indicates the female. These very light coloured examples are simply immature. I hesitate to express an opinion in respect of the flank spot. I make these statements not for the purpose of dogmatising but of inviting discussion.

One more digression, started by Mr. Hawkins' Long-tailed Grassfinches, and then I have done.

Last October, Mr. Seth-Smith drew attention to the varying colour of the bills of this species, and says (p. 258), "I have sometimes thought there must be two distinct forms." In November (p. 19), Miss Hodgson supported this view on the authority of a German avicultural paper. I have myself kept the species continuously since 4th May, 1897, and have found over and over again that the normal colour of the bills of my birds is of the yellow type, but that they assume the red (I use the expressions red and yellow, although not strictly accurate, for the sake of convenience) as the nesting season approaches. The colour of the bill will completely change from the yellow to the red in a few days. Strong vigorous males, especially if kept in the warm, will retain the red bill for months, while I have known a female adopt and lose the red in less than a fortnight. I notice too that, as my birds grow older and lose vigour, they have less of the red. Mr. Seth-Smith has found that the Yellow Bills have the longest tails. If my birds are anything, I feel inclined to say that they are Yellow Bills, but never have I had such a tail as we see repeatedly at the Shows. Now my birds for the most part have had to rough it in my open, exposed aviary during a great part of the year, and have had but very moderate warmth during the winter. I have not treated them thus because I consider them hardy, but because I have nothing better to offer them. If I could, I would follow Mr. Todd's example (Vol. III., p. 210); and it was Mr. Todd who first and so quickly reared the species. I totally disagree with those who tell us that the species is hardy. The Long Tail is a strong bird, and will stand a great deal for a time, but is none the less greatly affected by cold. Occasionally I have kept a pair of these birds in a warmer place; and I look back and find I have recorded how these latter have become prettier and prettier, and have acquired a bloom on their feathers which is never seen on the others, and which with these is lost as soon as they are turned loose. When I regard the beautiful condition of many exhibited specimens, sometimes Yellow Bills but oftener Red, I can see at a glance that they have been kept under totally different conditions from my own. I

have repeatedly found, with birds generally but especially foreigners, that it is the protected specimens, and those kept in the warm, that have the glorious bloom and softness and richness of colour which one sometimes beholds. It seems to me, too, that this species would be rather sensitive to artificial treatment. Moreover, as regards the tails, as I observed years ago in the Shâma, birds kept in the warm will undoubtedly throw out longer tails than will those which live in the open aviary. Altogether I think the case non proven, and that we should do well to suspend judgment for a while; and in the meantime perhaps some of the gentlemen who exhibit these beautiful specimens may be willing to give us their views on the subject. Am I far wrong in suggesting that in the Parson and Long-tailed Grassfinches we have an example of a species subdividing into two distinct species or sub-species? The specimens of the original parent which found their way North (or *vice versa* as the case may have been) seem to have developed into the magnificent Long Tails under the influence of a tropical climate, while those going South have degenerated into the stunted-tailed Parson.

Mr. Hawkins' Long Tails were good, with red bills, but not so good as others I have seen. They were an undoubted pair, and that brings us to another point. The female and only the female of this and of other undoubted pairs exhibited from time to time, so far as I could see, had the white mark at the tip of the two outer feathers on each side of the tail. Only quite recently I have noticed that it is stated in the Museum Catalogue of Birds, at page 376 of Vol. XIII., that the *young* of this species have "all but the centre tail-feathers broadly tipped with white." I have never seen any but the two outer on each side tipped or touched with white, for the form that the white mark takes differs considerably at different times even in the same bird. But be this as it may, the Catalogue is inaccurate in inferring that only the young have the white tips, for my two old females have the white tips now as plainly marked as when I first noticed the peculiarity. I have had two adult males and three adult females; the latter have always had the marks, the males never. Of my three hybrids referred to by Mr. Seth-Smith, I examined them on October 22, and then two were strongly marked while the other, the best of the lot and apparently a male, had a faint touch of white on only one feather. They have all three adopted the long tails of the mother; but somehow their general appearance and movements are those of the Parson Finch, and also the call notes. Their bills have slightly changed colour.

## BREEDING EXPERIENCES IN 1900.

By L. W. HAWKINS.

Some account of my breeding experiences this year may be of interest.

My aviary consists of a span-roofed building, one half of the roof being covered with boards and zinc, while the other half facing south is entirely glazed. The walls are double-boarded and have a window. The floor is concrete. A large portion of the space is enclosed with straight wire as a breeding aviary, and includes a loft 16 feet long. Here live in perfect harmony several pairs of seed-eating birds, each pair belonging to a separate species. Perhaps the most charming of these are the little Cuba-finches, *Phonipara canora*. Their appearance is very pleasing, but their chief attractions are their cheerful nature and continual twitter.

My pair came into my possession in January this year. In April they built a nest in a cocoanut husk, swinging on the roof near the highest part. The nest was composed of dried grass and feathers, and completely lined the husk, the entrance, however, being left quite free, so that it was easy to see into the nest. Four eggs were laid on as many consecutive days, and were white in colour, densely sprinkled on the larger ends with light brown marks. The hen sat alone during the day, and at night both sat together. Things went on satisfactorily for about a week, when the increased heat of the sun on the glass roof made it necessary to draw down the outside sun blind for the first time this year. The result was disastrous, for the Cuba-finches at once deserted their eggs, and nothing would induce them to return to them. It was very disappointing, as all four eggs appeared to be fertile. However, the little birds evidently became accustomed to the pulling down of the sun blind, for, about a month later, another four eggs were laid in the same nest as before. This time the sitting was more successful, for on June 14th one young bird was hatched out alive and well. Two of the eggs were thrown out of the nest and found broken, with young birds dead inside. The remaining egg also contained a dead bird. The young bird thrived and grew day by day, till it left the nest on July 2nd. When first hatched it appeared quite bare, no down at all being visible. The beak had a thick yellow edge, and the inside of the mouth was red. When it left the nest, it resembled the mother very closely. The yellow collar was very evident, but the upper throat was still bare. Both parents were at first very attentive,

constantly feeding it from their crops. I was, however, again to be disappointed. On July 8th, I noticed the young Cuba was too weak to leave the ground, and, thinking to save it, I picked it up and placed it in the nest. The parents immediately flew to the nest, and the male appeared terribly excited, flying into it with great force, and seemed to be trying to kill his offspring instead of feeding it. I believe his intentions were indeed murderous, for shortly afterwards the poor young bird again fluttered to the ground weaker than before. I then tried to feed it by hand. It took yolk of egg off a straw, but next morning it was dead. The day after this, July 10th, I was surprised to find an egg in the Cuba-finches' nest. They had commenced to breed again before the young one could feed itself, and consequently had deserted it. The batch of eggs this time consisted of three only, one of which disappeared during the sitting, and I never found it again. On July 26th, one young bird was hatched, and the third egg was found to be clear. This time I was determined, if possible, to prevent the parents breeding again until the young one could take care of itself. I accordingly put the nest and young one into a cage, and securing the parents placed them with it. All went well, and as soon as the young one left the nest on August 11th, I removed the nest. This time I was rewarded with success, and the young Cuba-finch now takes full charge of itself. It is a hen and could scarcely be distinguished from its mother, when only about six weeks old. I put the parents and the same nest back into the breeding aviary on August 30th, and, on September 3rd, the first egg of another batch of three eggs was laid, which however came to nothing.

I cannot find any record of *Phonipara canora* having been bred in Britain before. The allied species *Phonipara lepida* has, I am told, been bred this year by a gentleman in Scotland, two males and a female being successfully reared (a).

The Double-banded Finches have proved very prolific with me. My pair made a cup-shaped nest inside a cocoanut husk, hanging high up on the wirework side of the aviary. The materials used were hay and a few feathers. Here they succeeded in bringing up three broods of two, four, and three young ones, respectively, and they are now sitting again. In addition to those mentioned, I have two more young birds from the same

---

(a). I think these three young birds (from Dundee?) came into my hands, but they seem to be adopting the plumage of *P. pusilla* rather than of *P. lepida*. The song, however, of the surviving male (the other died from the effects of the journey) is *totally* different. My old female *Pusilla* (Vol. VI. p. 239) took to them, and they to her, at sight, the old widow mothering and feeding the young as if they had been her own.—R.P.

parents, hatched and reared by my Zebra-finches. These eggs were laid after the hen had been sitting on her first batch of eggs about a week, and were, of course, unhatched when her first two young ones appeared. I transferred them at once to the Zebra-finches, who were then sitting on eggs of their own in a cocoanut shell suspended in a cage. They brought up two young Zebra cocks and the two young Double-banded Finches together. When the young leave the nest they look like the parents, but the two bands are not so distinct, and the white parts are very dirty looking. When about three months old, however, they are not to be distinguished from the parents (*b*).

Last year I was rather successful in breeding the Long-tailed Grassfinches, but this year they do not seem to have managed so well. They have sat on four batches of eggs, two of which were complete failures, no eggs hatching at all. Once two young ones left the nest, but died a week later, apparently of starvation. On the last occasion two birds were hatched, one of which grew much less rapidly than the other, and finally died in the nest. The other is the only one reared this year. They build their nest sometimes in a German canary cage, and sometimes in a mahogany nest box hanging on the wall. My pair have red beaks, but a large number have yellow beaks. I have heard it stated that the difference is due to the age of the bird, the beak only turning red after a certain age. I have also been told that it is the aviary-bred specimens alone that have yellow beaks. I can only say that I have kept Yellow-beaked Longtails over two years without any change in colour, and that the beaks of my aviary-bred birds, from Red-beaked parents, have invariably turned directly from black to red. I assume, therefore, that there are two varieties.

The African Fire-finch is a bird with a strong inclination to breed. The great difficulty is to get it acclimatised. I bought four pairs last January, of which two pairs and a cock died within a fortnight. The surviving pair and odd hen are still in my possession. The pair have nested three times. The first time they lined a cocoanut shell on the wall with hay and feathers. They had three eggs and sat well, but all the eggs were clear. The second time they selected a cocoanut shell on the roof. This time they had four eggs from which three young were successfully reared. The third time they built a nest in a

---

(*b*.) This year I have fully reared five, in three batches; and others lived to leave the nest, but perished in the cold and wet. I find the elder ones may be distinguished from the adults by the narrow breast-band. The narrow breast-band is a sign of youth, not of sex as suggested by some aviculturists.—R.P



German canary cage, and from four eggs reared two young ones. The young Fire-finches, when just hatched, are rather pretty to look at when opening their mouths. The roofs of their mouths have black spots, and at each corner of the mouth are two milk white glands with a deep blue spot between them. When they leave the nest both sexes are brown. The cock sits alternately with the hen in the day time. At night they both sit together.

A pair of Masked Grassfinches, *Poephila personata*, have just (October 25th) succeeded in rearing five healthy young ones in my aviary. The parents have been in my possession about two years, and have made several attempts to breed, but up till now with no success. They seem very nervous birds and fly from the nest on the slightest alarm, and it is a very long time before they will return. The nests have always been made of very loose hay in a German canary cage, hanging high up on the wall. The shape is globular, with a very small entrance. On two or three occasions all the young birds have been found dead in the eggs. Once they hatched two young ones, but the hay of the nest was so loose that the young birds and the remaining eggs would sink and get lost in the hay. The little birds only lived a few hours.

Finding they had laid again last August, I removed the nest and put in its place another German canary cage, in which a pair of Parrot-finches had built a much more substantial nest. Into this I transferred the eggs which this time were six in number, though previously the number had always been five. The birds did not appear to notice the difference. Care was taken to leave the birds as undisturbed as possible, and on September 4th, five young birds were found in the nest, the sixth egg which was also fertile being found on the floor. The period of incubation was about sixteen days.

When first hatched, the young birds are very like young Long-tailed Grassfinches, but the marks on the palate are more distinct. On September 27th, all the five birds left the nest fully fledged. The colours are the same as in the parents but duller, the beaks, however, being black and the feet grey.

In my experience the Masked Grassfinch is a hardier bird than the White-eared Grassfinch. One pair of the former have outlived three pairs of the latter. The sexes are very much alike, but when seen together I have always been able to distinguish them. The breast of the hen is a decided shade lighter, and the portion of the mask under the beak a trifle smaller.

Three pairs of birds have produced batches of eggs, but

failed to hatch them. These are the Rufous-tailed Finches, Gouldian-finches, and the Red-faced-finch mated with a Cock Aurora finch. The Parrot-finches have made several nests, but never laid an egg.

All the eggs laid by my birds, except those of the Cuba-finch, have been white in colour.

## BIRD NOTES AT THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

By WALTER GOODFELLOW.

No doubt other aviculturists besides myself, who have visited the Exhibition this year, have been equally disappointed that their especial hobby has no place allotted to it among the exhibits, although everything else imaginable seems to be well represented. I had expected to find exhibits in aviaries and all appliances for the same; but, although I have paid innumerable visits to all parts of the Exhibition during the past few months, I have failed to find any, although it is possible that in some out-of-the-way corner such may exist.

One day recently I was tempted to visit the dreary Annex of Vincennes, away on the other side of Paris, where unlimited space is given up to all the exhibits which were crowded out of the Exhibition proper, by reading in the papers that one of the most interesting departments there was that devoted to "Aviculture." As not one out of every five hundred or more visitors to Paris troubles to go there, or perhaps knows that such an Annex exists, I thought I had a treat in store, and could perhaps find something interesting to write about for the "Avicultural Magazine" for the benefit of those who have not been able to visit the show. I chose an unfortunate day, for by the time I arrived there the rain came down in a deluge, and with no hopes of it clearing up. Guided by numerous sign-posts at the corners of all the paths, I picked my way through a sea of mud and water to the fenced-in part given up to "Aviculture." On arriving there I found it was another of the numerous "extras" of the Exhibition, with a charge of 25 centimes entrance fee, which I gladly paid if only to get under shelter until the rain ceased. I see by the tickets that the price had originally been fixed at one franc; but like everything else connected with this gigantic show and failure, all prices have had to come down to less than the half at first conceived by those who expected to make a fortune over it. On nearing my goal I was half prepared for a disappointment by hearing much crowing, cackling, and quack-

ing, which suggested more of the farmyard than aviculture, but I was not prepared to find it given up solely to poultry, rabbits and guinea pigs, the only exception being three very miserable deer, having as companions in their enclosure some wild ducks, and a few dilapidated golden pheasants. If the scope of this Magazine were extended, as some wish it to be, those members might have been interested to have heard more of these exhibits. As it was, the only thing dealing with cage birds was a gorgeous large drawing-room aviary in the shape of a house, with all the horrors of winding staircases, stained-glass windows, and artificial plants on the balconies, &c. This was in the Secretary's office, where I also found samples of every known kind of trap and means of catching animals and birds from a lion down to a mouse, and the largest hawks to the smallest finches. The French seem to excel in these inventions, although I see they call many of these—"piéges anglais," and "ratières anglaises," &c., but for such unsportsmanlike inventions as "grains diaboliques," and "Pilules du Diable," which figure on one list I had handed to me, I hope they take the full and sole credit of inventing and using.

Although there is no part dealing specially with cage birds in the Exhibition, there are, nevertheless, many exhibits of interest to the naturalist and aviculturist in the way of stuffed specimens and cabinet skins, scattered through the Pavilions on the Champ de Mars and also in a few of the buildings on the Rue des Nations. In this class Canada undoubtedly stands first, both in quantity and quality, and has a room given up entirely to her fauna. One could wish, though, that they were classified, and arranged better, and less crowded together. There are many rare and interesting birds among the exhibits, and some of the sea birds especially, are really well put up. I have found them sufficiently interesting to visit several times. Most of the French Colonies send collections of skins also, but without a single exception they are all of the commonest species, and have evidently been chosen only for their colours, and on the whole they form one of the saddest and most dilapidated sights in the Exhibition. Those that are mounted (generally on a large artificial tree in the centre of a room) bear little or no resemblance whatever to the living birds; and the unmounted skins are all nailed on the walls ruffled, shapeless, flattened out and covered with dust. This is especially the case with the Madagascar exhibits, although there are also one or two cases of fairly well put up skins from that Island. Martinique exhibits

skins of humming birds which never come from that Island at all, nor from any other West Indian island either. Of the French possessions, Tunis makes the best show, although they are arranged in such a dark corner of the Official Pavilion that it is difficult to see the majority of the birds properly.

In the Rue des Nations, Portugal has a good show of mounted birds, but principally shore birds, and Bosnia and Herzegovina also have a few interesting specimens. In this part of the grounds, however, Mexico stands far and away above all other countries. It is much to be regretted that this handsome building is so badly lighted, and many of the birds in such a dark alcove that it is all but impossible to distinguish birds from mammals. Those in the centre of the building can be seen to much better advantage, and for me possess the greatest interest, as most of the birds belong to families so well represented in Ecuador; in fact many of the species vary only slightly from the Ecuadorian ones. Among them I noticed that the Mexican form of Yellow-bellied Grosbeak (*c*) is very much larger than the Ecuadorian one, and not so brilliant, otherwise I could see no difference. I omitted to mention when writing of this bird that it is subspecifically separated under the name of *Pheucticus chrysopheplus chrysogaster*. Among the many handsome birds exhibited is a lovely pair of *Xanthura luctuosa* and also some fine Tanagers. There is also a wonderful and very large collection of *Lepidoptera coleoptera* (all beautifully set), and land shells.

In the Palace of Forests and Chase are numerous exhibits which cannot fail to interest aviculturists, although they do not concern them particularly. There the leading Paris taxidermists are well represented, and I noticed some rare Colombian birds among the exhibits of one well-known firm. A sight in this building which no one interested in birds could fail to think sad is in the Japanese section, which is taken up almost entirely by boxes of birds' skins of every known species from that country, exhibited with a view to obtaining orders for their wholesale exportation; which is quite a different thing to legitimate and limited collecting for scientific purposes. I understand that great numbers were sent to England in the early Spring of this year, to some auction rooms, where they were sold by the thousand for a mere song. Some of the daily papers had a deal to say about it at the time, and it was hoped that the absurdly low prices they fetched would discourage the trade as far as England was concerned. Perhaps here in Paris they may find a larger demand for them,

where feathers and skins are "faked up" in a marvellous manner for millinery purposes. There must be very many thousands of them in the present exhibition, for the boxes of small birds contain at least a hundred skins each, and include even canaries and the little Bengalese. Like everything else which comes from that country, they are the perfection of neatness in the way they are put up, and even down to the boxes they are packed in. Every skin appears to be perfect, with not a feather out of place, but all have that cylindrical form peculiar to the Japanese prepared skins, caused by putting them in a paper band before the skin is dry. A cap of fine rice paper is also neatly folded over the head, with a small opening cut for the bill to pass through. In each box a few are left unwrapped to show the species. One cannot help thinking that, if this trade is continued, Japan at no distant date will be quite denuded of birds; and she will find out her mistake when it is too late. I am sure no one could more regret it than themselves, for the Japanese are really fond of birds, and seem to understand the treatment each kind requires in captivity much better than most people do in England, and I have often thought we might go to them for wrinkles.

Ecuador has a pretty little pavilion at the foot of the Eiffel Tower, and might have sent an interesting collection of bird skins, but I was prepared for disappointment there, as when I was in the country last year I knew the Government was not troubling itself much in that direction. No other country could have sent so large and interesting a collection of humming birds alone. The few badly mounted ones, in a large case of mixed birds occupying the centre of the ground floor, are the commonest ones to be found in the country, and they are so very badly put up that it is difficult for one who knows them in life to recognise them at all. The case also contains some of the long-tailed Resplendent Trogons, which of course are not found in Ecuador. I hope that no one who has seen the collection will for a moment imagine that in life the beautiful Cocks of the Rocks (*R. sanguinolenta*) in the least resemble in shape and attitude those that are mounted there. I see I did not mention these birds in my Notes on Ecuador, and I don't suppose any member of the Society has had a chance of keeping any of the species alive, which is a pity, as I know for a fact that perhaps few birds are hardier or so easy to keep. The blood-coloured one is by far the handsomest, then the *R. peruviana*, from Eastern Ecuador, and lastly the *R. crocea*, from Guiana, which is also the smallest.

With the exception of a few birds chiefly from the Caucasus, exhibited in the Russian building by the Trocadero Palace, these seem to me to be the only items of special interest in the Exhibition to those who are fond of studying Natural History.

I have been continually surprised to see the numbers of people who take an interest in the bird exhibits, when there are so many marvels to occupy their attention in other directions, and people whom one would hardly suppose would glance at such things: yet if there is a case of birds in a room, I have often found it difficult to get near it.

I wonder if any other visitor to the Exhibition has remarked the number of Blackbirds to be seen about the grounds in spite of all the noise, bustle, and the hundreds of thousands of visitors which daily crowd the grounds. I have sometimes counted eight or nine in the course of an hour, mostly around the Trocadero, but also in the trees close up to the Palace of Electricity.

---

## HOW TO KEEP SMALL FOREIGN BIRDS OUT OF DOORS IN WINTER.

By WESLEY T. PAGE, F.Z.S.

In writing this paper I am not questioning Mr. Wiener's methods in the least. For the indoor aviary they cannot be gainsaid; but it is very probable there are many, like myself, who are compelled to keep their birds out of doors all the year round; and if say Waxbills, etc., could be kept only under the conditions stated, it would be a real deprivation to many, because of their lack of indoor accommodation. For myself there are few birds I would keep in the average box cage, even though they appear fairly contented and keep in good condition; for the data gathered together under such conditions can be of but little value.

In my garden aviary, among a mixed collection, there are usually about twenty Waxbills, my losses among them in four years having been about four; and these have taken place during the very hot weather and before the commencement of the autumnal moult. My aviary is simply a lean-to shed, 14ft. by 6ft. by 8ft., boarded on three sides, covered with  $\frac{1}{2}$ in. mesh wire-netting in front, and has an open flight at one end. It faces almost full south; from N. and E. winds it is wholly sheltered, and partially from the W. also. This is all the shelter they get, no

matter how severe the weather ; I never make use of blinds or shutters in any form whatever ; and though I am aware a few of our members will possibly exclaim in horror at my cruelty as they read this, I certainly am not conscious of its existence ; and I will never believe that birds which sing, bathe, and are blithe and gay all the day long can be either *miserable* or *suffering*.

The Waxbills of which I am writing are, briefly :

Indian Avadavat	..	( <i>Sporæginthus amandava</i> ).
Green Avadavat	..	( <i>Stictospiza formosa</i> ).
Grey Waxbill	..	( <i>Estrela cinerea</i> ).
St. Helena Waxbill	..	( <i>Estrela astrilda</i> ).
Zebra Waxbill	..	( <i>Sporæginthus subflavus</i> ).
Orange-cheeked Waxbill		( <i>Sporæginthus melpodus</i> ).

They have for companions a fairly representative series of the genus *Munia*, a sprinkling of Grassfinches, a few of the *Emberiza*, and a pair of Cockatiels.

I venture to say that, if members were to compare notes, it would be found that those keeping their birds in out door aviaries suffer by far the smallest number of losses ; again, the indoor aviaries are by no means free from epidemics, as some aviculturalists know to their cost.

I will now quote an instance of one day last winter, when it was necessary to break the ice in the bath three times during the day ; *Sporæginthus amandava*, *S. subflavus* and *S. melpodus*, so soon as the ice was broken (*i.e.* three times), went in, had their tub, then away into the branches to preen their feathers ; between times they were on the wing continuously, trilling their sweet and merry little lay, as happy—well as a bird could be.

They have the usual seeds, soft food, and generally manage to secure one meal worm daily from the *Emberiza* ; when obtainable they also get grass in flower ; they must have sand and also cuttle-fish bone.

Simple as it seems this is about all that is required. Under such conditions the birds will thrive and charm the aviarist by their happy and contented demeanour and quaint entertaining birdy ways.

Wholly insectivorous and frugivorous birds can only in most instances be kept indoors, though I believe our fellow member, the Rev. C. D. Farrar, has succeeded in keeping and breeding several of these entirely out of doors.

My locality is Shepherd's Bush, London ; in spite of the fogs we have to endure I have never supplied artificial light ;

though from observations made in friends' indoor aviaries and cages, artificial light during our long winter nights is a *sine qua non* of the indoor aviary (*d*).

In conclusion, my *ideal* of a garden aviary is simply to net in as large a space as possible, and to stand inside one or two shelters after the style of the rustic summer-houses now so common in the market; and to closely plant the other portion with a few evergreens and deciduous plants, such as box, arbor vitæ, bush forms of willow, poplar and cheap fruit trees (*e*), with a few blackberry brambles, filling up the spaces with sowings of tall growing grasses and cereals (*e*). I am unable to give details for this year as I was taken ill last Xmas eve, and am still too weak for business; so my birds have been left to the care of others and have simply existed, but I cannot grumble: only five have died including two of the aforementioned Waxbills (*f*).

## THE WHITE-BREASTED KINGFISHER IN CAPTIVITY.

(*Halcyon smyrnensis*).

By E. W. HARPER, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

From "*Bombay Natural History Society's Journal*," 29th July, 1900.

Although in no part of the world can the Kingfisher be said to be a common cage-bird, on account of the difficulty in catering for its appetite; yet anyone who really values gorgeous colours in a bird can, with very little more trouble than is ordinarily bestowed upon an insectivorous bird, keep the Kingfisher in perfect health and plumage.

The first two White-breasted Kingfishers which I reared were fed entirely upon pieces of fish, cut up to about half the size of a hazel-nut; also, on small whole fish when procurable, alive or dead. These birds were procured when just ready to leave the nest, and kept in good health for four months, when I presented them to the Calcutta Zoological Gardens. That was

---

(*d*) I do not agree with Mr. Page that artificial light is indispensable for indoor aviaries in Winter; I never supply it; yet I have reared Zebra-finches at Christmas time. If new-born birds can pass through the long nights without food, undoubtedly adults can do so. Moreover, years ago, I tried turning a light upon the seed-hoppers in my bird-room for an hour or so, but hardly a bird took advantage of it.—A.G.B.

(*e*) Some may say these will be destroyed at once; not if the aviarist suits the number of birds to the space, or space to the birds.—W.T.P.

(*e*) For more than a dozen years, I have had several currant bushes in my garden aviary: but beyond destroying the flower the birds do them but little harm. I think the redcurrant bushes do the best.—R.P.

(*f*) This may answer in London but it certainly would not do in exposed situations in the country in Winter, except for very hardy species.—D.S.-S.



in 1897, and they were the first specimens the Zoological Gardens ever had.

The London Zoological Gardens, however, purchased a single specimen as long ago as 1884. Unfortunately a civet cat killed the two birds at the Calcutta Zoo a few days after their arrival.

Last summer, having obtained another White-breasted Kingfisher, I determined to adopt a different method of feeding it. Small pieces of raw lean meat were pushed down the bird's throat, until, in a day or two, it took the meat of its own accord. This meat diet was varied with pieces of fish, the bird always striking its food (as it would have done a live fish) upon its perch three or four times before swallowing it. This was done with a jerking movement of the whole body. Lizards, shimps and grasshoppers are greedily accepted as dainty morsels by this bird. Although I have had the bird about nine months, yet I have never seen it drink. Its meat and fish are always placed in a jar containing three or four inches of water, into which it plunges its massive beak to take out its food. I might also add that the bird sometimes immerses its beak in the water, instantly withdrawing it with a shake of the head, even when not feeding.

For some weeks the Kingfisher was kept in an aviary containing a number of other birds, such as minivets, white-bellied drongos, black-headed orioles, golden-backed woodpeckers, &c., with all of which it agreed perfectly; but owing to the fact that other birds used to eat any meat or fish scattered by the Kingfisher, and as this upset their digestions, I had to remove the latter bird to a separate cage.

It greets me with a faint cry accompanied by other signs of pleasure when I offer it any food. It is tame enough to sit upon my finger; but, in the presence of strangers at close quarters, evinces a certain amount of fear. The bird's plumage is perfect, and quite as bright as that of a wild bird. Mr. F. Finn, B. A., A. Z. S., Deputy Superintendent of the Indian Museum, who saw the bird, said, "It is a distinct triumph." The bird is extremely fond of bathing, as might be expected. When I think it requires a bath, I stand the cage in a tub of water a foot deep, removing the lower perch of the cage. It plunges in head first, sometimes a dozen times in as many minutes. The ejection of pellets of fish-bones and other indigestible matter is preceded by a few minutes' gaping and straining. The average weight of food eaten in one day is 1½ ounces, or equivalent to about 21 minnows.

Since the above has been published, the Kingfisher referred to has been presented to the Zoological Gardens, Calcutta.—E. W. H.

# NOTES on BREEDING the MADAGASCAR LOVE BIRD, (*Agapornis cana*), AND OTHER BIRDS.

By F. W. OATES.

I don't remember seeing a case of breeding the Madagascar Love-bird in the Magazine. I suppose the fact is not worth recording, the birds are so common and, according to some authorities, "easily breed." That they are both common and cheap, I fully agree with; as to being easy to breed, I am quite of an opposite opinion. I have kept them for years, and, until this season, have never been able to rear any. However, at last I have been fortunate enough to have a fine nest of four come off, and under rather remarkable and unusual conditions, too. I had fully decided the hen was dead, not having seen her for weeks (seven or eight, I believe); and the cock, the unfaithful little wretch, had forsaken her early in the Spring, and taken up with a hen Bluewing, since which I have not seen him pay the Madagascar the slightest attention; so how she has arranged matters, to rear them by herself, and at the same time to keep out of sight, is a mystery.

Among other birds that have bred with me this season is my old pair of Mealy Rosellas. Other years one nest has sufficed, though this year they have gone one better, and had two. Certainly the first clutch proved clear, but they made amends in the second by rearing three grand youngsters. Hitherto they have never had more than two eggs per nest.

Another season, I hope to be able to record a nest of Blue Bonnets. Of Cutthroats, Zebras, etc., I have quite a flock: with me they breed like the proverbial mouse. I have had several nests of Double-banded Finches, not reared; only the other day I found two newly-hatched young thrown out of a nest. My Parrot Finches have all proved cocks; it is very disappointing, after one buys several birds, thinking you are bound to have a pair out of the lot, to find them all of one sex.

I had hopes of having a nest of Woodlarks last Spring. The hen made a nest in a slight depression under one of the bushes in the outer aviary, but that terrible scourge to aviculturists, egg-binding, put a stop to all further proceedings on her part in that direction.

Like the Parrot-finches, my Diamond Doves are all males. There do not seem to have been very many imported the last

year or two. We fanciers here have had to take what we can get, and often what we do get is what we don't want. Many of us don't even have the pleasure of a first visit to a London bird shop—we can get taken in at home.

My Quails have only done badly this season. They made their first nest out in the open, during that miserable wet stormy weather we had in July; the second night after hatching proved a regular deluge, and, with the exception of one chick, all were drowned. After rearing the odd chick, the hen nested again, inside this time; seven eggs were laid, all fertile, though the young were unable to break out of the shell: want of moisture, in this instance, proving as destructive as too much in the first nest.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

---

### LONGEVITY OF PARROTS.

SIR,—I saw recently a Grey Parrot which was brought to England by Sir Malcolm Pasley in 1860 or 1861. The bird was then a good talker, but now it seldom speaks, and shows all the signs of extreme old age. A cousin of mine saw this Autumn, in Venice, a Macaw, which is said to be 136 years old. One of the ladies who saw the bird, writes: "The old servant of Don Carlos, living at Palazzo Balbi, said the bird had belonged to the grandfather of the Duke." Don Carlos is called Duke of Madrid, and his grandfather was Charles IV. of Spain. Charles IV. died in the first decade of this century. "If Don Carlos," the lady adds, "had his parrot's manners and appearance he might be King of Spain."

ELLINOR J. B. THOMPSON.

---

### BREEDING RECORD FOR 1900 AT MICKLEFIELD.

SIR,—I enclose list of our doings for 1900:

One Nest of Nonpareils.
" " Indigo Finches.
" " Malabar Mynalis.
" " Barrabands.
" " Turquoisines.
" " Pennants.

EGGS. Spectacle Thrushes, Diamond Sparrows, Green Avadavats, Cherry Finches, Zebra Waxbills.

HALF-GROWN YOUNG OF *Ruficauda* TWICE; drowned each time.

C. D. FARRAR.

---

### ILLNESS OF RUSSIAN BULLFINCH.

SIR,—You kindly advised me as to the illness of my Russian Bullfinch in the Summer, from which he has quite recovered and is in very good plumage, but appears to have something wrong with his legs, as he sits

for hours on his feet, disinclined to move and looking unhappy. He does not take flights nor go to his bath as formerly, though he can fly well and strongly. Can anything be done to improve this? I should also be glad to know how to treat a Green Avadavat; its head and neck have been bare for the last six weeks, at least, with no appearance of young feathers, and now I see that the upper part of its back is in the same condition. All the other birds (fifteen) are in good feather. I shall be very much obliged for advice in both these cases.

N. M. S. WARD.

*The following reply has been sent to Mrs. Ward:*

Your Bullfinch is probably suffering from a slight touch of cramp: in such cases a mild purgative, followed by strengthening medicine, is often useful.

Give it, for one day, five grains of Epsom Salts in its drinking-water; and when this has acted effectively, give (instead) six drops daily of syrup of phosphates in its drink.

Green Avadavats are especially addicted to plucking one another; so that, if you have more than one example, it is almost impossible to prevent unsightliness: these little Waxbills are also somewhat combative, and lose feathers in their constant skirmishes with other birds.

A. G. BUTLER.

#### GREENFOOD FOR WAXBILLS, ETC.

SIR,—I should be much obliged if you would let me know if it is advisable to give Waxbills and African-finches green food and grass seeds; if so, what kinds? I am only just starting to keep a few, and feed them on millet, canary and spray millet.

M. E. STANYFORTH.

*The following reply has been sent to Mrs. Stanyforth:*

When grass is in seed, it is decidedly beneficial to collect a few handfuls in the fields and give them to Waxbills and any other finches. Also when chickweed is to be obtained fresh and not frostbitten it is a useful green food. During the winter a little dry grass-seed, such as the corn-chandlers supply, makes a welcome change of diet, but it is not absolutely necessary to the health of the birds.

A. G. BUTLER.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF SMALL BIRD.

SIR,—A small bird has come into my possession; can you oblige me with its name? It is as follows: Size about the same as the Reddish Finch; head, bluish grey; throat, white, with a sort of half-collar, not clearly defined; beak, dark horn-coloured above, bright-red underneath; chest, pearl grey, shading into pale yellow; tail, black; tail-coverts, vermillion; legs, black. I am told the bird is African, but should have thought not.

GRACE ASHFORD.

*The following reply has been sent to Miss Ashford:*

I have no doubt that your bird is Dufresne's Waxbill, probably a hen, as that sex wants the black mask of the cock and has much redder upper tail-coverts.

Dufresne's Waxbill is a native of South Africa, from the Knysna to Natal; and from the Transvaal to the Zambesi.

A. G. BUTLER.

## BREEDING OF SHARP-TAILED FINCH AND SILVERBILL HYBRIDS.

SIR,—I thought it might interest your readers to know I have bred two hybrids (male and female) from a cock Sharp-tailed Finch and a hen Silverbill.

They were born in July, and are most like the hen but a shade darker, and have a few spangles here and there; the bill and legs are also darker. But what I think curious is that they have some dark red feathers on the saddle, which are noticeable when flying. Neither parent has any thing approaching a red tinge.

Their call-note is like the Sharptail, but the male hybrid sings like a Silverbill only louder. They are lively and altogether very interesting birds.

CHAS. DELL.

## A TAME BARBARY TURTLE.

SIR,—The following case has just come under my notice, and is, I think, worthy of being recorded in our Magazine.

An old lady has a tame Dove, a friendly and constant companion. She is in the habit of taking a nap in her arm chair of an afternoon; and the Dove sits on the back of a chair close by: as the old lady dozes off, so does the Dove. But the other day the Dove, instead of taking its seat on its accustomed chair, perched on the lady's head. and, as the lady snoozed off, comfortably nestled itself in her cap.

In due course the lady awoke, and tried to remove the Dove; but the Dove declined to allow itself to be removed. A female relative came to her assistance; and then it was found that the Dove had laid an egg—a beautiful instance of trust and confidence in a dumb creature.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**  
BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 3.

*All rights reserved.*

JANUARY, 1901.

---

NESTING OF LAVENDER FINCHES.

(*Lagonosticta cærulescens*).

By ROSIE ALDERSON.

I purchased my pair of Lavender Finches in the spring of 1900, from Mr. Robert Green, Bedford Conservatories, Covent Garden Market; and here I may mention in passing, that though the prices are higher than most other dealers' his birds are always very good. The Lavenders, when they arrived, were in excellent condition, and in perfect plumage. I put them in my smaller heated aviary, with many other small Waxbills and Finches. The first nest was built in half a cigar box, (placed lengthways on, and divided in the centre). Five eggs were laid towards the end of July. I left home on August 7th, and learnt on my return that, when I had been from home about ten days, three dead young birds had been carried by the parents out of the nest. They were quite hard and stiff, and evidently only a few days old. A little later a fourth nestling was treated in the same manner, but it appeared to have been dead only a short time, and was rather older than the others. The fifth egg in the nest was clear. It was very small, pure white, and round in shape.

Almost directly after this, indeed I believe it was the next day, the birds began a second nest, in some Scotch fir branches, fastened to the back wall in a far corner of the aviary. This nest was not built in any box. It was chiefly composed of hay, and fir needles, and was domed and oval in shape. I returned home on September 13th, and the first news that greeted me next morning was the information that it was believed the Lavenders had hatched their eggs. But again my hopes sank, for the parents scarcely seemed to go into the nest after the first few days. I tried them with wasp grubs, ants' eggs, and cut up mealworms; the latter item the Lavenders have always

been fond of. The wasp grubs they played with, but did not seem to eat. Gentles they were almost indifferent to. I tried to get some aphides, but it was too late in the year to be able to keep up a supply.

On October 1st, while I was in the aviary, one of the old birds suddenly emerged from the nest with a young one dangling from its beak. The poor little thing was quite dead, and looked older than those in the first nest who had shared the same fate. Its wing quills were very decided, and its body was covered with grey down, but it was thin and did not seem to be well nourished. It was very disappointing, and I was quite perplexed as to what to provide in the way of extra diet to ensure the young being fed ; but apparently there were no more in the nest, for the old birds seemed to quite lose their interest in it, and one day I saw one of them with a huge feather in its beak, as if preparing to build again. So certain was I that the nest was forsaken, that I arranged with a carpenter to come and make some alterations in the aviary. As it would have meant endless trouble to have caught up all the birds, he had to work amongst them. Unfortunately the work was in that part of the aviary that was near to the Lavenders' nest. I noticed when the man went outside that they flew round about, but I never suspected that any young ones were left alive, and put it down to the naturally inquisitive nature of the little birds. While the work was going on, I was suddenly startled, while standing in the aviary, to see what appeared to be one of my Lavenders suddenly grown much smaller, shuffling rapidly across the floor, (it could hardly be dignified by the name of flying). The small object fled behind a hot water pipe, and tried to squeeze through a tiny space, where the pipe passes through into the next aviary. It nearly put an end to itself by getting its head fast, and I had a terribly anxious moment trying to release it. The little thing chirped loudly, and, when I at last got it free, it dashed off into a far corner with great speed and disappeared from view. I found it a few minutes later sitting in a corner looking quite composed, and as if nothing had happened. Whether the joiner's hammering had brought it out of the nest prematurely, I do not know, but I should hardly think so, as, calculating that the bird was hatched when I returned home, it must have been about a month old. The baby Lavender was the sweetest little ball of grey feathers, much the colour of the old birds, but rather darker. The tail was dark red, edged with black, and the wax skin round the beak very distinct. Its eyes were very bright, and black as sloes. There were no white spots on the flanks

as in the adult bird, indeed, beneath the tail it was quite bare of feathers.

It was most amusing to see the joy and pride of the parents; they stood in front of the little creature, jerking their tails with pleasure, and evidently exchanging congratulations with each other on such a remarkable infant prodigy. The young one received their adulation very calmly; it slept that night upon the floor, but by the next day had climbed up into the branches. It was evidently partly fed on seed, as some white millet was plainly visible in its crop. The old birds fed it from the crop in exactly the same way as Canaries feed their young, first working up the food in the throat, before transferring it to the young bird.

The next day, finding a Bronze Mannikin inclined to peck the young Lavender, I caught it, and also the hen, and put them into a large cage, meaning to also secure the cock; this I failed to do, and the old birds so fretted at being parted, that I had to let the captives out again. While I had them in the cage, I examined the nest to see if there were any more young birds in it, as if there had been I had meant to cut out the nest from the branches, and fix it in the cage, (this was of course before I abandoned the idea of being able to catch the cock). I found a young bird, its crop quite empty, dead in the nest. It was very plump, and nearly the size of the other bird, though the plumage on its head was not so developed, and the bill and feet were pinker than in the elder nestling. I think the poor little thing must have died of starvation the day the joiner was in the aviary. Later on, a third young bird, about the same size, was found in the branches; it had evidently been dead for some time, for its body was quite dry and hard.

On October 13th, the little Lavender had mounted quite high up in the branches. It could fly the length of the aviary, and sat pluming its tiny wings with great satisfaction, and amusing itself with nibbling the ends of the gorse twigs.

On October 24th, the old birds began to build a third nest, near to where the first had been. I had purposely given them no fresh material, (for it seemed unwise to let them nest again though both birds seemed perfectly well and strong) but they began stealing it from the other birds' nests, so I was obliged to give way, and provide some. After I had done so, the work progressed rapidly; by the evening of the next day, the nest, (which was the same shape as the second one), was thickly roofed over, the favourite material being asparagus bass, cut about three



inches long. I found if the sprays were given any longer they became rather awkward for the birds to manage. Only one bird seemed to work at once, and I fancy the hen did the principal share. It was very pretty to watch them fetch a spray and carry it up into the nest, then turn round and drag it inside. They worked very fast, and raised the roof by pushing it up vigorously from the inside with their beaks. A few feathers formed the lining, and a narrow hollow tunnel, (hanging rather downwards), was attached to the nest.

On Sunday, October 28th. I noticed the hen looked puffy, but soon looked quite herself again, and I concluded the first egg had been laid.

I wish I could leave the story of my little Lavenders here, for the sequel is a very sad one. On November 3rd, the hen was found ill, evidently egg bound, and scarcely able to fly (though only a short time before she had looked quite bright and lively). She died about ten o'clock at night to my great sorrow. The cock and little one miss the hen very much, and look quite lost without her, for the three made such a pretty trio. They still sleep in the nest at night. I found there were no more eggs, so apparently the hen did not commence to lay until almost a week after the completion of the nest. I should add, in conclusion, that, besides the usual seeds always in the aviary, namely canary, white and Indian millet, and four kinds of grass seeds, the birds have had for the last few weeks a dry mixture of crushed broken biscuit, preserved yolk of egg, and a little maw seed. Of course this is given fresh daily. I first began it for some breeding Canaries; but the birds, and especially some small Doves, all seem so fond of it, and it appears to do them so much good, that I have continued it every day. Of course, as soon as I knew about the young Lavender, I provided mealworms (cut in several pieces) at short intervals during the day, and, what I think very important, *always* left some mealworms over-night, so as to be ready for the birds first thing in the morning. To-day, November 12th, I have examined the Lavenders' second nest (the autumn cleaning in the aviary having begun) and I find it is made of chickweed, hay and feathers, the latter woven in as well as lining it. Inside I found one or two ants' eggs, which looks as if they had formed part of the food for the young ones. The interior of the nest was very dirty.

Lavender Finches have always been great favourites of mine; their little ways are so quaint and cheerful. One very fine cock I once had, called "Little Billee," was the liveliest of all

my tiny birds, and the ringleader in any mischief that was on the stir. It was in the days before I had my aviary, and all my little Waxbills lived in a large three compartment cage.

"Billee" was very fond of bathing in the glass bath that hung on the cage door, but was too great a coward to go in head first, and always lowered himself gently *backwards* into the water, in a most amusing fashion. I have not found Lavender Finches at all delicate if once acclimatised. "Billee" lived for a long time, and much enjoyed his freedom in the aviary, but, with his wife, came to a sad end. She was a very healthy bird, and the darkest in colour I have ever seen. An ailing, newly arrived Zebra Waxbill escaped through a bent wire out of its quarantine cage, and, though at first there appeared nothing much the matter with it, infected not only my hen Zebra, but also both the Lavenders. As usual they were very curious over the new comer, and paid a terrible penalty for their inquisitiveness. Only one out of the four birds (the hen Zebra) recovered; one after another the others died.

Two other Lavenders I once had infected each other, almost directly after their arrival, with a most curious disease, in the form of wax coloured growths on the face, spreading very rapidly over the eyes. Both were chloroformed, as it seemed cruel to let them continue to live. I am thankful to say I have never had a bird suffer from the same thing before or since.

The baby Lavender, who must by now be about two months old, shows no sign of the white dots on the flanks, and its tail is still much darker than the adult cock bird (*a*).

## AVIARY NOTES.

By A. CORALIE CHARRINGTON.

I am tempted to send a short account of my aviaries, which, although they do not contain anything very original, afford me much pleasure. I think the experiences of other amateurs form one of the most interesting parts of the Magazine.

I have three outdoor aviaries facing S.E., but sheltered by the house from the east. They lead one out of the other, and consist of a boarded shed, and wire runs, each run being about 10 feet wide, and 15 feet long. The shed is quite open to the run, but

---

(a). Will not Miss Alderson be so kind as to say in what particulars, if any, the plumage of her breeding female differed from that of its mate?—R. P.

Since the above was written the white spots have fully appeared on the flanks. I first noticed them on Dec. 4th.—R. A.

has a high roof for shelter. Part of the run is covered over with rain proof felt, which helps to keep the run dry. The end aviary is rather exposed to the S.W. gales, so there are two removable shelters made to rise on the outside of the run; these are covered with Duroline, a material consisting of woven wire, washed over with a transparent yellow substance like varnish. This is quite rain and wind proof, but lets in light and warmth. During the summer (from May to November), I have kept in No 1. aviary a pair of Chinese Quails, two pairs of Gouldian Finches and a pair of Zebra Finches.

In No. 2. I have had Zebra Finches, a pair of Trumpeter Bullfinches, a North American Siskin, a cock Nonpareil, one hen Chinese Quail, and a pair (or perhaps I should say two) Bleeding-heart Pigeons.

In No. 3, a pair of Californian Partridges, two Rosy Pastors, a Green Singing Finch, a pair of Parson Finches, and a pair of White-headed Love-birds

One pair of Chinese Quails had twenty-two eggs, but did not sit steadily; and there was no result from these eggs, though some were fertile. She then laid nine more eggs, and sat steadily, hatching seven. Unfortunately I had to go to Scotland the day they were hatched, and when I returned a month later only one survived. I am told it is impossible to rear them without fresh ants' eggs. Is this so? The survivor lived for a week, and was very healthy and lively on a diet of Abrahams' mixture, Spratt's game meal, and small mealworms, but I found it dead one morning. The hen Quail laid five more eggs, but it was then too late in the year and I took them away.

My Gouldians nested freely, but only one hen laid. She had five eggs, on which she and the cock both sat most faithfully, but they did not hatch, tho' all were fertile. They are now indoors in a large cage, nesting again, but I must remove one pair, as they disturb each other. I find these birds easy to keep on canary seed, spray millet, and a little maw seed, with, in summer, unlimited chickweed, grass tufts, and particularly shepherd's purse—and always cuttle-bone and egg shell. The two pairs eat most of an egg shell in twenty-four hours.

The second pair of Gouldians have not nested, or rather havenot laid as yet. I see in the November No. of the "Avicultural" Mr. Wiener recommends the seed of a grass, *Setaria glauca*, as very much appreciated by Gouldians. I wrote to Messrs. Sutton for some, but they do not keep it. I should be glad to know where I can get it.

I have had eight Zebra Finches from two pairs, all cocks. They are very beautiful little birds I think, tho' so common.

My Parson Finches have built one nest after another, all the summer, in every box, husk, and bush they can see, but have not laid. Last year they laid on the ground, but did not build. They are now building again in a box tree—but I fear it is too late for any results outdoors.

No. 2 aviary is too crowded, I had no breeding results. The Desert Bullfinches laid five eggs in April, but did not hatch, and the hen died in June, when I found she was a ball of fat. I am not sure if my Bleeding-heart Pigeons are a pair. They agree fairly well, and one sometimes follows the other about cooing in a deep tone, and bowing till his beak touches the ground. I notice these birds drink without raising the head, as do also the Gouldians. They keep the beak down in the water for some seconds, and seem to suck up the water.

In No. 3 aviary, the Californian Partridges laid over thirty eggs, but are so wild that they did not attempt to sit. I put some under a Bantam, but, tho' they all contained chicks, they did not hatch. Next spring I shall put them in a wire-covered fruit run, and see if they will be happier. They will have more shelter and insect food. *Apropos* of fruit runs, I had a Silver hen Pheasant in this run all last summer, and she cleaned the gooseberry bushes of every caterpillar, and did no harm to any of the fruit, while she herself had the look of absolute health.

In August last I purchased a pair of White-headed Love-birds, and as the weather was fine turned them out at once. I was away a month, and on my return could not find the hen anywhere. After several days watching of every box and corner, I caught her burrowing under the tub containing a box tree in the centre of the run; and once having run her to earth I constantly saw her carrying small pieces of leaf she had cut out of a large branch of Eucalyptus, under the tub. She tucked the pieces under her back and wing feathers, and her feathers became quite rough by this process. The cock kept watch most vigorously, and drove away any bird who was daring enough to go anywhere near. He fed her at the entrance to the hole. After three weeks of patience I ventured to lift the tub and investigate, only to find bits of egg shell and one clear egg. The nest was on the ground, just a slight hollow filled with cuttings of leaf. The hen went to work again, and laid three eggs, which I left a week, and then finding them clear, I took them. Is it not unusual for

these birds to nest on the ground? I propose leaving them out all the winter. Will it be safe?

The Rosy Pastors are two cocks, and most charming birds; very tame and most quaint in the way they run about and chatter at each other. They remain out all the winter.

I want very much to breed some Mocking Birds. I had one for over nine years, and his brother for nearly seven years. They were brought me from Virginia out of the nest. They were wonderful singers, going on in summer all night and day, and ultimately died of old age.

I was in Madeira last spring, and had the great pleasure of visiting Mrs. Reid's aviaries. Her articles in our Magazine are so interesting, that it was nice to see her birds.

Her Grey Parrots breeding in a small cask in the open were the picture of health, and her endless other Parrots, Finches and Waxbills were nesting and living as happily as if in their wild state. Of course the climate is a great help to success, and I came away with a feeling of despair at having to cope with our dull, damp climate. The Cordon Bleus in Madeira were a never failing source of envy to me. One saw cages of twenty or thirty of them at a time, in the perfection of plumage and brisk health; but they cost a great deal, 8/- a pair, which seemed too much. I wonder if any of our members can help to name a bird which I saw for sale in Madeira. It was the size of a Java Sparrow, with much the same shaped beak, but thicker, and dull slate colour. The plumage of the bird was glossy jet black (like a Combasou), but on the point of each shoulder was a round spot of white, the size of a sixpence. It had a very melodious whistle, loud for its size, and lived on canary and millet. The man who had it said it came from Demarara, and he had seen only one other. This bird was very old, or I would have bought him. I fear I have digressed far from my original subject, but one thinks of so many points of interest when writing of birds, that I hope I may be excused. One other little point may interest your readers. I brought home a Madeira Canary, which lives in a cage in the same room as an Indian Plum-headed Parrakeet. The Canary's song is an absolute imitation of the Parrakeet's whistles and cries, in miniature, and I have distinctly heard it whistle "pretty dear," and once "pretty Polly," mixed up with its song. It sounds most extraordinary, especially when the two birds go on together.

## AN OUTDOOR AVIARY.

By the Lady DUNLEATH.

Perhaps some of your readers may be interested in hearing of my aviary. It consists of a one-roomed cottage, 12 ft. high, 18 ft. wide, 30 ft. long: it is thatched first with straw and after that with heather; the inside, walls and roof, is covered with dove-tailed wood sheeting, and the floor is covered with peat moss litter. It has besides the door, six windows, two at each side and two larger ones in front, all of which open, and the openings are protected by half-inch mesh wire. The outside run is 90ft. by 51ft., and in it I have planted small evergreen trees, and stumps of trees and dead branches are put here and there round the sides; in the middle there is a shallow cement bath. Both the cottage and the run are divided down the centre by half-inch mesh wire. In one side I have thirteen Parrakeets, one pair of Teal, two Popes, seven Californian Quails, and one pair beautiful Nicobar Pigeons, and Nauday, Rose-headed, Scaly-breasted, Purple-headed, and Brown-cheeked Parrakeets. In the other side I have St. Helena Waxbills, Golden-breasts, Paradise Whydahs with splendid tails, Orange and Red Bishops, one Crested Cardinal, one pair Virginian Nightingales, a Pekin Robin, two pairs Indigo-birds, two Nonpareils, Zebra Doves, Cut-throats, Zebra Finches, Combasous, Saffron Finches, Canaries, one pair Black-headed Gouldian Finches, and two pairs Parson Finches. I started the aviary last March and put out Canaries, all of which have done well. Towards the end of May I put out Waxbills and other birds, Weavers, Nuns, and so on, and had very few deaths. In June, I was obliged to go abroad, and during my absence the Popes reared one young one, with a tawny orange head. It was strong and able to fly, when unfortunately it was killed by a very heavy storm of rain. Returning through Paris I bought there about twenty Waxbills, some Nonpareils and Whydahs. They were far less expensive than in England and have all done very well. I kept them in their travelling cages in London for a fortnight, and took great care of them, feeding and watering them several times a day, and keeping them out on a small flat roof outside my lodging window. As soon as I returned home I put them in the aviary and did not lose one. The Popes built again in July, making their nest in some furze branches under the roof. They laid two eggs, one of which was hatched; and the young bird feathered very quickly.

It was apparently quite strong and healthy and able to fly through the aviary, when one day I found it twirling round and round on the floor. I did all I could for it but it died. It was *very* fat, and in beautiful plumage. The parents were very fond of it, and whenever I gave them mealworms, took them at once to the young one. I also reared a Zebra Dove, but rain killed it after it was able to fly about outside. There have been about twenty young Zebra Finches all doing well, and I saw a nest of six appear only the other day just able to fly. The Parson Finches also sat on eggs, but the mice, who I am sorry to say have found out the aviary, broke them all (one mouse was found in the nest). There is all round the aviary a bed of cement, which prevents any rat from finding a way in, and I thought the wire mesh was small enough to keep out mice; but we have killed nine in the cottage. I now propose to hang branches and nesting boxes from the roof by thin wire, as the sides of the house are so smooth that no mouse could get up them. If it had not been for the mice I should have reared very many more birds.

I got the Gouldians from P. Castang, Leadenhall Market; they are very handsome, and in perfect health. To-night (*b*) for the first time I have shut the door and front windows, the temperature being forty-five inside. The aviary is not heated. My Virginian Cardinals made several nests and laid eggs, but unluckily the Popes were in the same division and killed the cock Cardinal.

I have had for some years a big heated aviary in a large conservatory attached to the house, and I intend, if I find any of the birds suffer from the cold, to move them up to it. I have as yet only had to bring in two Parrakeets, which were in full moult and felt the cold very much. The others are all in beautiful plumage, having all moulted outside. The Nonpareils last week had hardly a feather, and were covered with "spikes," yet they persisted in roosting out of doors, and are now almost in their full plumage and the Indigo and Combasous have got their Winter suits.

I forgot to say that I reared ten Californian Quails from a cock and two hens; I tried to bring them up under Bantams, but only succeeded with seven as the Bantams broke so many eggs: the parents brought up six, but three died. I have only three cocks, the rest being hens. The two hens laid about 60 eggs.

## ACCIDENTS.

By REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

Some years ago a well-known authority, giving a lecture, made a statement to the effect that if a bird meets with an accident it is best to kill it and get another, as it is not worth while to nurse an injured bird. After the lecture, I mildly protested; and the great man replied that it was a mere matter of sentiment. To my mind it is much more than a mere matter of sentiment. If we keep birds it is our duty to do our best for them; and I always feel that the familiar words of Cowper are not inapplicable in this connection:—

“He was designed thy servant, not thy drudge,  
And know—that his Creator is thy Judge.”

Miss Alderson, as shewn by her interesting letter which appears at page 207, Vol. vi., has followed in the footsteps of the humane poet; and I hope that the Shama whose life she has spared may live to reward her with many a long hour of brilliant song.

Nevertheless I am not satisfied that it was necessary to amputate the leg. Let me state a case.

A Chinese Blue-Pie (*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*), a great pet of ours, who was most nervous and fidgety in her younger days, during 1888-9 broke the upper part of one of her legs no fewer than three times:—(1) an Ariel Toucan approached the outside of the aviary in which she was confined; and in her hurry to dash at him and shew off her magnificence and her pluck (she was an arrant coward—but then there was wire-netting between them) she caught a claw in the wire, and snap went the limb. (2) When convalescent, one night she was frightened by the approach of a stranger, dashed about in her cage, and re-broke the leg. (3) A year or so later, while as it is supposed she was hiding some tit-bit amongst some books which had been piled up in an untidy heap, several fell on her, breaking her leg again; this time a very serious compound fracture. On each of these occasions the limb was set and its use regained. And when I add that she lived with us, without further mishap of the same kind, for some nine years after the last fracture, in the enjoyment of excellent health and the use of both legs, living with us altogether for over twelve years before we passed her on to a friend, I think it will be seen that it is not necessary to kill a bird just because it has broken its leg, nor as a rule to amputate the limb.



On one occasion I was taking a farewell look at the birds before starting for the West of England, and tossed down a mealworm in a narrow path for a Cuckoo, a wall being on one side and thick bushes on the other. A Stork, seeing the mealworms in my hand, charged down the path at me just as the Cuckoo was making for his mealworm. The sudden appearance of the Stork flurried the Cuckoo, who lost his head and got trodden upon, his leg being broken just at the joint. I at once applied a figure-of-8 bandage, very hurriedly for trains will not wait even for a broken-legged Cuckoo, and placed the bird in the same cage which had three times sheltered the old Blue-Pie. On my return about a month later, I found that, owing to the bandage having become relaxed or worked a trifle loose, the limb was slightly crooked, but otherwise quite well, and the joint not showing much sign of stiffness. The bird too was in excellent health; and even the plumage was more presentable than is too often the case with the Cuckoo in confinement.

In later years a Himalayan Blue-Pie (*Urocissa occipitalis*), on arriving here, when loosed out of his travelling box was found to have broken the upper part of his leg. This likewise was set, and the full use of the limb recovered.

With a broken leg, I am of opinion that unquestionably the limb should be set. To leave it unset, as some have recommended, is cruel; and, if it be the upper part that is broken, fatal results may be expected to follow.

It might seem unnecessary to add that, in setting a bird's leg, it must be set with the leg bent up, to enable the bird to stand on the other leg. I was out on the last occasion that our old Blue-Pie broke her leg; and when I reached home I found that a Vet. had been called in, who had fixed the limb perfectly stiff and straight, and so stretched and pulled down from the body as to reach fully an inch below the other leg. I remarked that the bird could not possibly live with the leg in that position, as it could neither eat, nor drink, nor stand, and would batter itself to pieces the instant it was loosed,—to which the Vet. made reply that that was how he always set a horse's leg. But a bird is not a horse; and although the poor beast was nearly dead from exhaustion, for she had been under very rough treatment for nearly two hours, and although night had come, there was no help for it but to cut off the bandages as best we might, and make a fresh start. Now it had so come about that, after the second break, the leg had been set with the toes pointing out too much, an unsightliness with which we had patiently borne for

many months, and which I was now determined not to repeat ; and with this resolve biasing my eye, and with the assistance of the shadows cast by artificial light, and aided still further by my anxiety to dispose of the case as speedily as possible, I fixed the leg this time with the toes turned in too much—and in this slightly awkward but not unsightly position it remained to the end. As a consequence the bird, when at rest, would often place one foot on the top of the other, as if folding her hands as it were ; and this used to give her a singularly quaint and pathetic aspect. But I doubt if anyone ever noticed that there was anything wrong, or suspected for a moment that a leg had ever been broken.

When a bird is being operated upon for any length of time, a taste of water (not too cold) given now and again, and even a taste of plain, unsweetened, watery sop, will greatly refresh and give it heart ; and a little fluid magnesia should be added to allay the fever. Brandy should not be given unless there should be faintness or collapse, and then only sparingly, and should not on any account be continued ; and the food during the illness should be of the plainest.

A broken wing is often a less serious matter, for the bird can hop about and keep in health ; and sometimes the muscles will keep the wing in position and render a bandage unnecessary. The patient, however, should be kept in a very low box cage, with a perch but a trifle off the ground, so that it may not be put to any temptation to open its wings ; but this is only speaking generally, for the details of the treatment of every case must depend upon the nature of the case.

In March, 1898, my bird-woman came to me with the intelligence that one of the birds had just fallen on to the floor. On the floor of the birdroom I found a little shapeless ball of feathers. A Redrump had nipped a male Grey Singingfinch, breaking the wing ; and the shock and the fall seemed to have killed the bird. But it recovered ; and since has been, and is still, the best songster of the flock, and has been the father of several fully-reared youngsters. In this case I made a mistake, and let him out of the hospital too soon, and direct from the box cage to the aviary and the company of a quarrelsome Green Singingfinch. As a consequence, the limb "gave" a little ; and although the bird can fly perfectly well, when at rest it may be seen that the wing is a trifle out of position, which was apparently not the case when the bird was first restored to liberty.

In September, 1899, I found that one of my two Red-backed Buntings (*Emberiza rutila*) had a broken wing. I think

a nervous Pied Grallina (*Grallina picata*), a new arrival, had given it a casual peck. Taking warning by the Grey Singing-finch, I kept the Bunting in the hospital for a longer time, and placed it for a while in a flight cage before returning it to the aviary. At the present time it is absolutely impossible to detect the slightest trace of injury to the wing, or to say which bird (of course I personally know the bird) was injured or which wing was broken. It still is, as it previously had been, much the better and the more active bird of the two. The mend seems to be perfect.

I mention these details with the view of helping our younger friends, and encouraging them to do their best for their feathered captives, and not unnecessarily to take away their poor little lives just in order to save trouble,—not but that I must fully admit that a broken limb, especially a leg, is often a very wearisome business to attend to.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

---

### AVIARY FOR WEAVERS.

SIR,—It is a great pleasure to hear that a member of the Avicultural Society has as much as 60 by 24 feet space at his disposal, and proposes to devote this to an aviary for Weavers.

Great things can be done with such an aviary. But if adequately stocked with hundreds of birds, many battles and much bloodshed and murder would result in the breeding season. To avoid this and to obtain success in breeding, divisions are necessary. If an aviary of 60 feet long is divided into three, four, or five compartments of 20, 15, or 12 feet in length each, very much more breeding will be accomplished than if the same number of birds are free to quarrel in one huge space.

Another point to consider is that, in an aviary 24 feet deep the birds would become shy and wild. They would, on the approach of an observer, retire to the farther perches, trees, or shrubs, and at something like 20 feet distance it becomes difficult to watch a bird's life and habits; whilst foreign birds soon become used to being looked at more closely when housed in compartments of less depth, allowing of better observation.

If I had such a space for an aviary, I should carry a corridor through the middle of it, and cut up the 24 feet depth into compartments of 8 feet in depth, allow 5 or 6 feet for a corridor, and the remaining 10 or 11 feet as maximum depth.

As regards height, I do not quite share the opinion of my very esteemed friend, Dr. A. G. Butler, that about 10 feet should be the maximum. In writing "I should not recommend that the aviary be more than 10 feet high: it is difficult to catch birds in very lofty aviaries."—Dr. Butler probably thought of the necessity of catching with a net weakly, or damaged, or quarrelsome individuals. With a net it is of course difficult to catch any bird in an aviary higher than 10 feet. But is it necessary to use a net at all?

I found that entering an aviary with a net frightens and upsets the birds in a dangerous manner. Broods would become infallibly disturbed. We easily lose sight, in the general turmoil, of the one individual whose removal has become necessary, even at the risk of accidents, which are more than likely.

When I wanted to catch a bird I never used a net, but entered my aviary very quietly, armed with a pot of tepid water and my gardener's small hot-house syringe. My birds knew me, and did not mind much my coming among them. I waited quietly until the bird whose capture was desired was in a favourable position, and easily marked him with a well-directed stream of water from my syringe. A second douche was easily applied and brought him down, when he was caught by hand, put in a cage in readiness, and in a quarter-of-an-hour the bird would be dry and feeding again as if nothing had happened. In this way I avoided all accidents and any very great excitement. I see no reason why an aviary should not be more than 10 feet high, and would not mind having one 15 feet high and even more.

To have flowering plants in an aviary is impossible. To have climbing plants like honeysuckle, ivy, or Virginia creeper (c) outside the wire and overgrowing the aviary would be pretty, but end in disaster. These plants would only help mice, rats, stoats, cats, and other enemies of the birds to climb all over the aviary.

The only plants which I found possible to keep alive inside my aviary were: ivy in pots, arbor vitæ, and holly. All these can be obtained of large size at reasonable prices, but they should be well established before the birds are put into the aviary. I should be half inclined to try a weeping willow, if there is time to plant a big tree and to allow the roots to become well established, for it will always be a race between the tree and the birds, whether the birds will destroy the buds and shoots faster than nature develops them. But even a dead weeping willow would be useful to Weavers.

A pair of Grenadier Weavers once built a most beautiful nest in my aviary in the top of a straggling holly tree, and brought up a brood of five young. I could never understand how this interesting family and their mother found room in their nest.

The floor is best made of cement, as a protection against rats and mice (to be afterwards covered with gravelly sand) as suggested by Dr. Butler. But perhaps a third of the floor might be laid out with garden mould. I would try this, and sow it with a rough kind of fast growing grass. This grass would of course soon be pulled up by the Weavers, but, by keeping half or one third covered in rotation with a small forcing frame, successive crops might be obtained with advantage.

It is not advisable to keep any Finches with Weaver-birds; but Thrushes, the beautiful African Glossy Starlings, or small Indian Pagoda Starlings, Mocking-birds, Mynahs, and such birds have been kept by me with Weavers in the open-air parts of my aviary, without accidents. The very pretty small Chinese Quails, or the graceful Californian Quails, might also live in the company of Weaver-birds.

AUG. F. WIENER.

---

(c). I have any amount of Virginia creeper in and on and all about my aviary; the birds delight in it, but the cats do *not*. The birds delight also in the balsam and common, but not in the Lombardy, poplars; and these not only live but flourish.—R. P.

## KEEPING SMALL FOREIGN BIRDS OUT OF DOORS.

SIR,—*Re* my Paper on "Keeping small Foreign Birds out of doors in Winter." I venture to hope I may be permitted a few words in reply, *re* (1) A. G. B.'s, and (2) D. S.-S.'s comments on same.

1. I have seen Dr. Butler's aviaries. He has had years of experience of them, and during that time he states he has kept them without artificial light; therefore that practically ends the matter there. But his aviaries (excepting two) are largely constructed of glass, and are almost as *light* as outdoor aviaries; when writing, I had in mind the *ordinary bird-room*, and therefore my use of "*sine quâ non*," *re* indoor aviaries, *was certainly too sweeping*. At the same time, it appears to be the general experience of aviculturists that, in the *bird-room*, artificial light is beneficial, and tends to lessen mortality during the dark days of Winter, especially in *London*. (*d*)

2. Mr. D. Seth-Smith's note is set against my last paragraph, that was written in the light of my whole article, in which I insist on shelter from the N. and E. as a *sine quâ non*.

*In London* we are very heavily handicapped against the country; fogs, impure air, etc. (even in the suburbs) make the keeping of birds in or out doors none too easy a matter. I should have more confidence in my ideal aviary, pitched in an open field, in open country, than in London; of course, under such circumstances, the enclosure should be boarded up on the N. and E., and have open wire work or netting on the S., W. and roof, the small shelters or one large one having openings on the S. only.

Will the Rev. C. D. Farrar kindly break his silence as regards his aviaries, and give us a description? As far as I can gather from what he has written, they are very similar to my ideal; if I am wrong perhaps he will correct me. It was really from reading his experiences, and from a list he kindly gave me of the birds I could keep out of doors all the year round (and his county, Yorkshire, is one of the coldest and bleakest of English counties), that decided me to take up aviculture again, as, with the exception of a pet or two in a cage, I must keep them out of doors or not at all.

Finally, none of the birds mentioned in my article have been in my possession less than four years, most of them for a longer period, so that my facts were not hastily arrived at; and I venture to assert that, if the conditions I have named are carried out, the birds named can be successfully kept out of doors all the year round *in the open country*.

Our Magazine gets more interestingly useful month by month, and those responsible for same are certainly entitled to the hearty thanks of all the members, for the time and labour unselfishly given, though the success attained (and greater) is, I expect, all they require and aim at. There must be, though, still many members who do not contribute their avicultural experiences; this is certainly to be regretted.

WESLEY T. PAGE.

---

(*d*). Mr. Page's criticism of my note does not apply; as the light was turned on to my bird-room aviaries, which have the rest of the house above them, and are, by far, the darkest aviaries I possess.—A. G. B.

## THE RED-BACKED BUNTING.

SIR.—I shall be very grateful if any member will kindly identify a pair of birds I have just purchased. The dealer from whom I bought them calls them Yellow-breasted Finches, and says that they came from Asia, and fed on canary seed and mealworms.

The birds are about the size of a Java Sparrow, but much more active-looking. The back is brown-green, with narrow, regular, black marks (about half-an-inch long) running down it. The wings and tail are also brown-green, but each feather has a light, dull yellow edge, giving the bird something the appearance of a Lizard Canary. The breast and under parts are bright Canary yellow, while the head and throat are rich chestnut brown, making a very beautiful contrast. The beak and legs are both flesh-coloured, and the middle and hind toes are larger than the others. The eyes are very round and black.

In the cock, the Canary yellow meets at the back of the neck, but in the hen the top of the head is green-brown, and merges into the back colouring. They are decidedly handsome birds, very quiet and intelligent. I have found them very fond of mealworms, and they are birds that soon seem to get tame. Can you kindly tell me, (1st) their correct name, (2nd) their proper treatment, (3rd) about their value per pair.

Might I make a small suggestion while writing, namely, that in any article in the Magazine where the Latin name of a bird is used, *the English one should also be added*. To any Member, who, like myself, is not a very good Latin scholar, it would make the interesting accounts of different birds much simpler reading, than when a book of reference has to be turned to, every few minutes, to translate a Latin name. R. ALDERSON.

---

*The following reply has been sent to Miss Alderson :*

I have no doubt that your birds are what are called Japanese Buntings; though whether they are obtainable wild in Japan, is doubtful. Red-backed Bunting used to be the dealer's name for the kind.

Your description of the back is perhaps more applicable to the common Indian species, *Emberiza luteola*, known as the Brown-headed Bunting, but I do not think this bird has been much imported lately, whereas the Red-backed Bunting has been fairly common in the market. I should feed on canary, oats, and sunflower, with two or three mealworms daily. Prices vary according to the supply in the market, but I should not dream of paying more than 10/- a pair for them myself; indeed I think (if I remember rightly) I refused a pair at a lower price. A. G. BUTLER.

---

 PARSON AND GRASS FINCHES.

SIR—I have found Parson Finches, also the Long-tailed Grass Finches, veritable demons in a small aviary—killing Mannikins, Nonpareils, and Waxbills, by tearing open the skin between the shoulders—Is this their usual disposition, or is it due, perhaps, to the aviary being too small for the weaker or less aggressive birds to get out of the murderers' way?

J. VINER LEEDER.

---

*The following reply has been sent to Mr. Leeder :*

In answer to your question, I may say that, more often than not, I

have found the Parson Finch extremely aggressive. A cock I once had (e) killed a ribbon Finch and pulled several feathers from the back of a Bar-shouldered Dove. Another made itself very objectionable in a community of Mannikins and Waxbills; several of which, I believe, were killed by it. I have never possessed a cock of the Long-tailed Grass Finch, but should expect it to show a similar disposition.

You did not state the size of your aviary, but mine were large enough to render disputes quite unnecessary. A. G. BUTLER.

#### WINTERING FOREIGN BIRDS.

SIR,—I have been much interested in the remarks of Mr. Page and Mr. Phillipps as to the heat birds require in Winter.

Mr. Page's remarks confirm Mr. Farrar's experience as to the cold Avadavats will endure with impunity. They rather confirm what I have noticed in Parrots—that cold can be endured as long as there are no draughts.

And yet I find that there is a great difference in Parrots as to susceptibility to cold; a difference I cannot explain. For instance, Amazons, Macaws, Cockatoos, Conures, Ringnecks, and Broadtails seem indifferent to cold; and Grey Parrots, Lories, *Psecephali*, and Caiques to be very susceptible to it.

I think I have seen it stated that migrants bear cold in aviaries better than seed-eating residents.

Mr. Buxton, in his experiments at Northrepps, found the dislike of the Grey Parrot to cold was an advantage to them, as they took shelter, which the Cockatoos not doing, got their toes frostbitten (f).

It would be very useful if aviculturists would give us their experience on this point. F. G. DUTTON.

#### TREATMENT OF SMALL FOREIGN BIRDS IN WINTER.

SIR,—I quite agree with Mr. Wiener that artificial light is necessary for small birds at night in the Winter.

In the beginning of November I found, one morning, in my outdoor aviary, a small Green Avadavat lying dead; it was plump and in perfect plumage. Since then I have had a paraffin lamp lighted at 4.30, and hung in a large wire enclosure in the centre of the aviary (in the cottage, of course). The small birds, which used to look puffy and unhappy in the mornings when I let them out of doors, now all are in perfect health. I go down to the aviary frequently after dark and look through the window, and always find numbers of birds feeding, both large and small. I have lost none since. The lamp burns itself out during the night.

I shut up the birds at 3.30 p.m., and let them out about 10. a.m. In the Winter all the food is inside the cottage; also water, which I find is quite as important during the night as seed. N. J. F. DUNLEATH.

(e) It died last spring after about five years' captivity.

(f) I have found this to be the case with many totally different species. Many species which sleep in boxes will endure cold which will kill others equally robust, but who habitually sleep in the open.—R. P.

## GRASS SEED FOR GOULDIAN FINCHES.

Mrs. R. H. Gosling presents her compliments to Mr. Cresswell, and will be glad to know, in reference to Mr. Wiener's letter on Gouldian Finches' food, whether the grass seed *Setaria glauca* would answer in winter, procured from a seedsman, and given with millet, or whether the birds would only eat it in the ear, and could then only have it given to them for a short time each year, when the grass seed was ripe.

---

*The following reply has been sent to Mrs. Gosling :*

No definite reply can be given. The frequently considerable mortality of Gouldian Finches, the occurrence of egg binding, and the production of eggs without shells, point to the insufficiency of the usual food consisting of canary seed and spray millet. The fresh ears of *Setaria glauca* were tried with great success only quite recently. Since then I have given dried ears of the same grass, but found that the birds did not pick the dried ears as eagerly as they did the fresh. On the other hand I noticed that, when the bunch of dry ears was removed for the purpose of cleaning the cage, the Gouldian Finches eagerly picked the fallen grains out of the sand.

It should be well worth trying the effect of adding a little *Setaria glauca* seed to the food of Gouldian Finches. The results of one experiment with any food are scarcely conclusive evidence, because birds differ individually to some extent. In estimating results it should also be borne in mind that birds, in a state of nature, do not eat the same seeds all the year round. It would not astonish me if it were found that the eagerness of birds for some kinds of food varied somewhat with the seasons.

As observation in a cage can be much more close than in an aviary, and Gouldian Finches are mostly kept in cages, it is to be hoped that owners of these beautiful birds will publish the results of their observations.

AUG. F. WIENER.

P.S. Carbon copy and a few ears of *Setaria glauca* were sent to Mrs. Gosling.

---

SIR,—I have read with great interest Mr. Wiener's account of his Gouldian Finches, and of the good effect the grass-seed *Setaria glauca* had upon them. I have seven cocks and five hens, which fly about the bird-room. They only go to their cage to rest, and they generally nest in it also. Three of these birds I have had for four years, the others I got only a year ago. The hens have never looked in as good feather as the cocks. They have all moulted regularly in the spring, and up to a few weeks ago they were in magnificent plumage. Two of them are now losing the feathers round the beak and back of the head, and two of them have a sort of white cheesy growth at the corners of the mouth. I have had to separate the hens in a cage by themselves, for I found their mates were continually fighting over them and maltreating them. They made a nest lately in a cocoa nut husk and several eggs were laid, but they were all thrown out and broken, and most of them were soft-shelled. Twice I saved a hen, who was egg-bound. I should be very much obliged if you would tell me if *Setaria glauca* is to be had in this country, and where? I have always given my Gouldians flowering grass every day, when it is to be had, and I find they are very fond of fresh chickweed, and every other day I give them a teaspoonful of



crushed hemp, which they finish in a few minutes. Do you think this is the reason they are not looking well? The four hens which are by themselves are improving. They all seem to have had the first joint of the wing injured, I should say by being bitten (a Gouldian *can* bite, as I know by experience), then the feathers have dropped out. More than once I have found the joint bleeding, and they cannot fly, and indeed can scarcely hop up to the perch without great effort, otherwise they are in tight good feather.

CLAUDE D. ROTCH.

---

*The following reply has been sent to Mr. Rotch :*

I am not aware that *Setaria glauca* seed can be bought at such a price as to be available for bird food. It may be obtainable from seedsmen in small quantities.

Seven cocks and five hen Gouldian Finches would require a large-sized bird-room. If the proportion of sexes were reversed there would be less cause for jealousy and less fighting. All finches that I ever kept fought more or less during the pairing season, especially when there were more than one pair of the same species. Cock Gouldian Finches are certainly very pugnacious. I have heard of them killing their mates, therefore it would be better not to have more males than females. As a rule the fighting is harmless, but individuals differ.

The loss of feathers round the beak and on the back of the head, as well as the injury to the wings, is probably due to fighting. A white cheesy growth at the corners of the mandibles has never been observed by me on any finch, and I do not venture to guess at its cause.

In consequence of your letter I offered some hempseed to my Gouldians, but they would not look at it. I am inclined to think that hemp would be too heating for these birds and make them more quarrelsome.

Whilst your Gouldian Finches are very fond of chickweed, mine will not touch it. Chickweed late in the year, after having been exposed to frost, or fog, or much cold rain, should not be given to birds, as it may cause sickness. Although the fact of your birds being in "tight good feather" seems to negative the supposition, the growth you mention might be due to wet chickweed. In their native country these birds would scarcely get green food which has been exposed to English Autumn rains and fogs.

I should diminish the number of male birds, and separate the damaged females until quite recovered on a diet of canary seed and sprays millet.

The real cause of and certain remedy for soft eggs and egg-binding in the case of Gouldian Finches has, I fear, yet to be discovered; but if all members of the Avicultural Society will please to publish their experience in the Magazine, the cause and remedy will scarcely remain unknown very much longer (g).

AUG. F. WIENER.

---

(g). Give plenty of liberty, space, proper sand, and cuttle-bone, and separate the sexes for about half the year (unless you have a specially good winter aviary), and they will not lay soft eggs nor yet become egg-bound. They require much more exercise, and in this climate fewer nests, and these only during the warmer months. As a rule a female cannot lay three consecutive clutches with impunity. When separated, with common sense, they will live as long as you like.—R. F.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**  
BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

VOL. VII.—NO. 4.

All rights reserved.

FEBRUARY, 1901.

**CRANES IN CAPTIVITY.**

By the Rev. HUBERT D. ASTLEY.

There are no birds more stately or more ornamental than the Cranes, especially where they can be given a large space in which to walk about, where there is a goodly stretch of grass land on the border of a pond or lake, round which grow sedges, rushes, and water plants of various kinds; where clumps of bamboo and giant spiræas form backgrounds to the beautiful Japanese irises, as well as others of that charming species, such as *Iris siberica* and the yellow flag.

Where bold groups of pampas grass and *Tritoma uvaria*, or, better still, *T. nobilis*, give fine effects in August; and where giant ferrels, *Polygonums* and *Osmunda regalis* mingle together to enhance the beautiful effect of a wild garden; pushing themselves above the immense leaves of the *Gunnera manicata*.

In the water itself, if that splendid annual—the Canadian rice—can be induced to sprout and root, so much the better; but at any rate the *Aponogeton* and the many varieties that are now to be obtained of many-hued water-lilies, will bejewel the surface, and transform an ordinary pond into a Paradise.

Here if, as I say, the space around is roomy,—for Cranes, are, in a real flower garden, as is a bull in a china shop—these magnificent birds can be kept.

You can have sixteen species if you like: the late Lord Lilford had them all, I believe; but more than that number you cannot attain to, for the very good reason that there are no more in all the wide world.

And moreover, some of these are decidedly costly and difficult to obtain, especially the Wattled Crane of Africa, and the splendid White-necked Crane of Asia.

At this moment (January, 1901) I am fortunate enough to possess five species: and these are they. First and foremost—

they come first because I have had them longer than the others—is a pair of Australian ‘Native Companions.’ Not so tall as the Sarus Crane of India, but still very tall and very stately, and very ready to take offence. Very jealous too of any invasion of their territory, so that no other bird that cannot fly dares venture beyond a certain point.

The Australians are of a soft French grey, which is set off—as is the Grey Parrot by his red tail—by a scarlet patch of warty skin at the back of the head, which edges the greenish yellow skin on the crown. To see them stride round a visitor, their bright red-brown eyes looking defiantly, is most entertaining, the sexes shown forth by the demeanour of either bird. The male takes much longer steps, jerkily striding, with uplifted head; whilst the female, her head held on one side in a coy manner, sidles about with lowered petticoats; that is to say, with the elongated feathers of the wings drooping.

“What nice tame birds!” said some one to me not long ago. “Yes! aren’t they?” I answered. What would happen I well knew, but I kept silence just to see the fun of it. Nearer and nearer came the Australians, stalking and sidling, until the male bird being quite close to his visitor, turned his back (a way he has) and appeared to be admiring the view in the opposite direction. To stroke his beautiful grey feathers seemed natural, but even as the hand was outstretched, *whish!* he was round like lightning, fiercely digging with dagger-like bill at the intruder’s trousered legs! Tableau! And this attack was followed by exultant and loud trumpeting rattling cries from the Cranes, telling out their victory to the neighbourhood for quite two miles round; at least that, *with* the wind.

Cranes are long-lived birds, and have been known to exist for thirty-six years in captivity. Moreover, they are, as a rule, granivorous, so that their food is cheaper and cleaner than that of Storks, and Herons, and Ibises, etc. But they are fond of meat greaves, bread and dog biscuit, not to mention fish, though they can do without the latter. In the park, by the margin of the lake, my Cranes pick up a good deal in the way of roots of grass, either in the water or out.

They love to stand knee-deep in the shallower parts, where, with their images reflected, they add considerably to the features of the place. They are very hardy, and the water, however cold, doesn’t seem to give them chilblains. Certainly they can do without hot-water bottles, unlike ladies of my acquaintance, who become so parasitical in this respect that

they continue to use them even through the summer, whereby they undoubtedly diminish the strength of the natural circulation and render themselves more and more subject to cold feet. But the Cranes wade boldly into the icy water.

The Mantchurians are splendid fellows, well-known as depicted upon Japanese and Chinese screens. At a distance they have the appearance of giant white Storks, although their legs and bills are dark lead colour; for they too are snowy white with elongated black plumes on the wings, covering their white tails; and all this bold simplicity of colouring is set off by a touch of scarlet skin on the crown of the head. Very tall and very stately are these Mantchurian Cranes, with loud trumpeting voices.

When the water of the lake is lowered, which it sometimes is and easily can be, they look extremely picturesque as they wade about on the watch for the small fish which can be snapped up in the shallows.

And, at peace with them, there wanders a pair of snow-white Siberian Cranes, with Flamingo-like pink legs, and bills of the same tint. The fore-part of their faces has bare scarlet skin, cut sharply down by the eyes, which are fierce looking and bright yellow. It is only when they spread their wings, that one discovers they are not entirely snow white, for the primaries are black, which doesn't show when the wings are folded. Their voices are weaker, considerably weaker, than the Mantchurians' and Australians'; a musical, tremulous, whistling cry.

If it is necessary to catch them, one must charge boldly into the spot in which you have cornered them, for, with their amber-coloured eyes glaring at you close down on either side of the base of the bill, they show that they intend fighting, and will strike out like an Italian with his stiletto in double quick time, and at your face too!

It is a curious sight to see the Siberians swimming, for they do so every evening in order to roost on the island of the lake. Once upon a time their ancestors must have swum altogether, and had shorter legs, for the White Cranes turn themselves into what looks uncommonly like Pelicans, their heads low down in the water, and their long legs high up behind, so that they can better use their feet, duck fashion, for paddling. They don't give me the idea of being Cranes at all, until they reach the farther shore, when down go their legs, up go their heads and bodies, and the Pelican is suddenly transformed into a tall and stately Crane once more.

Then I have a pair of the Common Crane, which once was a native of Great Britian, and which is becoming almost as rare in Europe—more's the pity—as it has become in England.

Smaller, considerably, than the species already described, but extremely graceful. Dark grey bodies, with black and white running down the neck, and scarlet skin on the heads, the distinctive feature of the plumage being the black cock-like plumes of the elongated wing feathers, drooping over the tail. They too have a wild sounding, trumpeting note, and they too can be familiar and fierce, if they like.

But the smallest of all the Cranes is my fifth species, the lovely *Demoiselle* of Africa, India and different parts of Asia. Delicate pearl grey bodies, with long pointed wing feathers hanging over the tail, and black feathers depending in a point in front of the neck, rather like the ends of a lady's boa. Besides which, this dainty bird is ornamented with silvery white ear-tufts, growing in a graceful curve on either side of the head, and bending round to the neck. I wonder which learnt to dance first, men or Cranes? Cranes, I expect. They are ballet dancers from their birth, or, if they don't practise as soon as that, at least their steps and attitudes come to them naturally.

It is supposed that they are the most ancient living representatives of bird-life, and many a poet of older days has written about them. Virgil and Homer, *par excellence*.

A flight of three or four hundred Cranes is a grand sight, their weird trumpeting sounding from afar, before ever they come into view.

As fine a species as any is the larger Sarus Crane, in which the head and a large portion of the neck is scarlet with the curious bare skin, and the plumage is delicate French grey. A very tall and stately personage.

The Cranes at our Zoological Gardens need more space, and more artistic surroundings, which is, no doubt, difficult to give them. They don't look well enclosed in small paddocks, with a meagre asphalted pool in which to put their toes. They want a place something like the duck ponds, with stretches of open lawn, and groups of rushes and reeds. Above all they want fresh country air, where grimy London soots and smoky atmosphere cannot besmirch their naturally pure colouring and smooth plumage. There is a great difference between a country Crane and a town one, to the latter's disadvantage.

Some species breed fairly readily in captivity, especially the Great White and Black Mantchurians, and to this event I

am looking forward, for mine are youthful birds. Sometimes I have my doubts as to their being male and female! They are so much more of a size than the Siberians or the Australians.

## AUSTRALIAN BOWER-BIRDS.

By WESLEY T. PAGE, F.Z.S.

Simultaneously with the November copy of "Avicultural Magazine," there came to hand the October copy of "Bird Lore," the official organ of the Audubon Societies of America; it contained an article on the Bower-birds of Australia, by Mr. A. J. Campbell, of Melbourne; from which I have culled the following, not quoting *in extenso*, but abbreviating and in some instances, giving his description in my own phraseology, thinking they would be of much interest to our members, specially so just now, Dr. Butler having brought one of them (the Satin-bird) before our notice in the November issue, "Avicultural Magazine."

If they could be obtained at moderate prices they would make delightful inmates of our bird rooms, especially the last two, but they are very rare and I do not think these two have yet been imported.

### THE SATIN-BIRD (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*).

He describes the male as being specially beautiful in his satin-like, blue-black coat and beautiful violet eyes; the female is clad in a grayish-greenish mottled dress; which is also the colour of the young; the adult plumage is not obtained till the third or fourth year, some say not till the seventh year.

It is found principally in the coastal forests of Eastern Australia; they thrive in captivity, are poor whistlers, yet readily learn to articulate words, and are good mimics.

He describes the eggs as being of a rich cream colour, irregularly blotched with brown, nearly  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, two being the usual clutch, but occasionally three are laid.

The nest is usually found at the height of 12ft. in a tree or bush, constructed of twigs and leaves loosely put together. He notes as strange the fact that these birds, building so neat a bower (the walls of which are 12in. high, 10in. long, and 6in. apart) yet building so slovenly a nest; he further states that more than one pair of birds frequent the same bower—a lovers' bower—a rendezvous for match-making.

The Spotted Bower-bird (*Chlamydodera maculata*) inhabits

the arid and dry interior provinces. The plumage is of various shades of brown with beautifully spotted markings; the male has a band or frill on the back of the neck of a beautiful rose-pink shade; it has a harsh scolding voice, yet it is an admirable mimic.

The nest, loosely constructed of twigs, is placed in a thick bush, or on the forked branches of a small tree; its eggs (two or three) are beautifully and wonderfully marked (colour not given). This species adds bones to its bower or play-ground; as many as 1,320 bones were counted at one, another had 90 at entrance and 92 at rear; size of bower, walls 12in. high, 20in. long, 7in. apart.

#### REGENT-BIRD (*Sericulus melinus*).

He describes this as being one of the most gorgeous birds that emblazon the sub-tropical scrubs of E. Australia. The male has strikingly beautiful plumage of black and gold, yellow-coloured eyes and bill. The female is more soberly clad in a brownish olive-mottled dress, dark brown eyes and bill.

The eggs (mostly two) are strikingly and beautifully marked, judging from the illustration; the colour is not stated. Its nest is constructed entirely of sticks, and twigs, and is very difficult to find. The bower comparatively small, 7 or 8 in. high, 7 in. long, 3½ in. between walls.

#### GOLDEN BOWER-BIRD (*Prionodura newtoniana*).

This beautiful bird vies in its golden splendour with the Regent-bird; its home, the rich palm scrubs of Northern Queensland. An authenticated nest has not yet been discovered. Its bower is a wonderful structure, usually built on the ground between two trees or tree and bush, constructed of twigs, piled up round one tree in a pyramid form, 4 to 6 ft. high; a similar pile 18 in. high, is built round the foot of the other tree, the intervening space being arched over with stems of climbing plants; piles and arch are decorated with white moss, the arch more so with clusters of green fruit, resembling wild grapes; scattered around are a number of hut-like erections, giving the spot the appearance of a miniature blacks' camp.

The illustrations are beautiful reproductions of photographs of nest and bowers taken *in situ*, and consist of:

Bower of Satin-bird. Bower of Spotted Bower-bird, shewing sheeps' bones used as decorations. Nest and eggs of Regent-bird. Bower of Regent-bird.

## THE CHINESE SPECTACLE THRUSH.

By the Rev. C. D. FARRAR.

Some three years ago, when in London, I paid Mr. Luer a visit, as in duty bound, in search of curiosities. His shop, by the way, is worth a visit, for he generally has something good put away. I found it so this time; for, on looking into a certain cage, I saw a rare bird that at once attracted my attention. He was a fine chocolate-coloured fellow, with blue eyes, and curious triangular spectacle patches round the eyes. I knew at once that I had before me the Chinese Spectacle Thrush, and I saw he was a fine cock. I at first hesitated to buy, as I always try to get a pair. I got Mr. Luer into talk, and he told me he had taken him in exchange from Mr. Moerschell, of our Society. I said to myself: 'Oh, foolish Mr. Moerschell; some men never recognise their blessings until they are gone!' At the same time I blessed him for giving me this chance. I asked Mr. Luer if he chanced to have a hen; he said he did not know, but he had another Spectacle Thrush in a cage right up on the sky line. I asked him to reach it down, and I saw directly I set eyes on it that it was a hen, and a very good one, too, though shabby in feather. We soon struck a bargain, and I carried off my two friends at the end of the week to Yorkshire. I kept them in a big cage for some weeks until I had got them into condition, as I had to pull all the hen's flights and tail: they were so badly broken. I then transferred them to a big garden aviary, which I call the Wilderness, and where they have remained ever since in the company of Nonpareils and Indigos. Curiously enough, though insectivorous birds, they much prefer Indian millet to any soft food I can put before them, and it seems to agree with them admirably.

During 1899, they made no attempt at breeding; though they had the good example of a pair of Nonpareils before them. They stood all last severe winter with hardly any shelter; but suffered apparently no inconvenience.

The cock is an excellent singer, and I think he knows it. The hen sits by and approves by a low gurgle from time to time; she seems to believe 'that it is a grate art to know how tew listen.'

I really felt very sorry for these birds last winter, it was so bitterly cold; but they apparently held with Emerson that

"All sorts of things and weather  
Must be taken in together  
To make up a year  
And a sphere."



I think they are the only birds I know that are always satisfied with the weather. No matter what the condition of the atmosphere, they are contented and happy, and willing to affirm that the state of things at any given moment is the very best that could have been desired.

In summer, when the mercury goes bolting up to the nineties, they peep out of the bushes and look up at the sky, and say, 'Splendid! perfectly splendid! ideal weather for birds and ice merchants.' In winter, when the mercury goes creeping down fifteen degrees below zero, and the cold was nearly severe enough to freeze the inside of Vesuvius solid down to the centre of the globe, those Thrushes would sit out on a branch and exclaim, 'By gracious, did you ever see such weather as this! I like an atmosphere that freezes up your very narrer. It keeps up the price of coal. Don't talk to me of summer; give me cold and plenty of it.' If contentment is happiness, then the life of these Thrushes is one uninterrupted condition of blessedness.

Last year the Thrushes made up their minds to rear a family; but so shy and quiet were they about their projected plans, that I only knew things were 'fixed up' by finding a nest by chance which I thought must be theirs. I did it on the elimination of chance principle. There were only Nonpareils, Indigoes, and Thrushes in the enclosure. I knew it was not the nest of a Nonpareil, it was far too large for an Indigo; what then could it be but the Spectacle Thrushes? However, to be quite certain I knew I must possess my soul in patience and wait for eggs.

A morning or two later, on August 13th, to be exact, I took a casual peep, and lo! there was an egg in the nest; about as big as an English Thrush's, but rather rounder, and the same shade of blue, but without any sort of markings. The eggs were laid every other day, and the nest is not quite so large as a Blackbird's, and made of dry grass and bents beautifully woven together, and about four feet from the ground. My friend Mr. Oates was here on August 15th, and I graciously permitted him a peep, as an old and experienced aviculturist; and also with a view to stop all subsequent doubt and gainsaying. If 'Human happiness consists in having what you want,' I was supremely happy that August day. I remember reading once 'that Fortune sometimes shows us the way but it is energy that achieves success.' I determined that, if care was worth aught, success should be mine.

I carefully noted the day when the first egg was laid, and

made my plans accordingly: for it takes a lot of calculation to raise a nest of insectivorous birds. Some folks say that babies take a lot of rearing; but I would rather rear ten babies than one nest of Spectacle Thrushes. I know that Mark Twain says somewhere that 'one baby can furnish more business than you and your Interior Department can attend to'; but then Mark had never kept birds! Set him down to rear a nest of young Spectacle Thrushes and he would alter his view, and not be long about it either.

I felt a little bit proud over this affair. 'There aint but phew men who kan stick a whole henkerchief into the brest pocket ov their overcoat without letting a little ov it stick out—just by acksident.'

Here my article must end abruptly, for the Thrushes declined, for some reason, to sit; but still, as no one, so far as I know, has ever got so far as eggs, I thought this paper might be of interest. Next summer, if we all live and things go well, I hope to record some young Spectacles.

---

## THE BREEDING SEASON, 1900.

By W. H. ST. QUINTIN.

Without having anything very novel to tell, I am tempted to send you a few facts relating to last breeding season. It was an exceedingly late Spring in this district. I did not hear the first Chiffchaff until April 10th; while on the same date, I have a note that, in a plantation on the north side of our Wolds, about three miles from here, snow that fell in the blizzard of 15th February was still unmelted!

Amongst the Pheasants etc, running in a large enclosure, a female Cabot's Tragopan laid two eggs in an old Woodpigeons' nest nine feet up in a yew tree, and sat steadily. But, as at that time I had no male of her species, I removed the eggs. A Grey-hen, after being missing for some ten days, was found sitting on seven eggs in a nesthole so cleverly scooped out in the grass, that the bird's back was level with the surface of the ground, and she was very difficult to see. Although in this case there was a fine male bird, whose display in the early Spring was most amusing, these eggs did not hatch, possibly from having been touched by a night frost before the bird began to sit.

A Pink-footed Goose, tame-bred last year, nested; but her eggs were unfertile. But a pair of Whitefronted Geese, which for the previous three seasons had laid only clear eggs, under

exactly similar conditions, laid six eggs this year in their nest-site of 1899, and to my surprise hatched four Goslings, rearing two of them. Of Ducks a good many of the commoner kinds were reared; and we succeeded for the first time in bringing up some Shovellers. These birds appear to require a great deal more animal food than any other ducklings that we have reared here, Eiders excepted. Of these last, I am sorry to say that I have only one old female remaining. At this time last year I had a fine lot of seven. But in one fortnight during last winter, two splendid old drakes, one adult duck and two young birds of the year, all died in what seemed to be apoplectic fits. In fourteen years I have never lost Eiders in this way; and the reason I believe to be that by a mistake they were for several weeks allowed access to grain, including maize, thrown down to other waterfowl. A careful *post mortem* examination and analysis disclosed no other cause but this, which had led to the accumulation of enormous masses of yellow fat about the vital organs. To complete my misfortune, one of the two surviving ducks got out of the enclosure, and was caught by a fox the same night.

My Pratincoles, of which I have seven, had suffered a good deal from frost-bitten feet in the severe weather of the Spring, for I had no sufficiently warm quarters to offer them. Two pairs made "scratches," and in each case one bird (probably the male) sat hard, but no eggs were laid, though no one would have guessed this who saw the way in which the bird behaved. These birds make delightful pets, if allowed room to use their wings. Mine are comfortably housed this winter, and I hope for better results when the breeding time comes.

Both Diamond Doves and the charming little Painted Quails reared young ones, but neither of the species of Sandgrouse which laid eggs, *Exustus*, or *Alchatus*, hatched. In the latter case the aviaries had been fresh gravelled, and the eggs were broken against the small stones, in several instances with chicks partly formed. It is not easy to hit off the right kind of soil for these birds. If too sandy, the sides of the rather deep "scratch" fall in, and the bird never attempts to remove the sand, but makes a fresh nest.

My beautiful pair of Snowy Owls, now more than nine years old, laid their first egg on the 26th May; and the first young bird was seen on June 29th. Two fine young, one of either sex, were safely reared. I hope that, if any of my fellow-members acquire any of these fine birds, they will be very careful in regard to food.

With Eagle Owls one can take great liberties, either as to quantity or quality. But it is not so with the far more delicate "Snowies." They must have what falconers call "castings," at every meal, that is fur, and small bones. The only easily obtained food that seems to suit these birds perfectly is rabbit; and it must be fresh and not tainted in the least, or the Owls will go amiss. They will not eat birds in confinement, at least that is my experience, though when at liberty it is otherwise; and they are said to feed on Ptarmigan, etc., and sometimes even on fish. My birds sometimes have freshly-killed young rats or mice; but, I repeat, they must not have the rougher food on which the Eagle Owl will thrive.

A pair of Jays, which I have had for some years, for the first time nested this summer, on the lid of a basket fixed up in their aviary. One young one was hatched, but apparently it died and was removed: for on the old birds deserting the nest a week later, two eggs were found, each with a young one dead in the shell. As the Jays are very tame, if they go to nest again, I intend to leave the aviary door open, so that they may obtain a supply of natural food.

## A MISTAKE.

By REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

Years ago, when *Struthidea cineria* was rare—it is almost common now—a lady was looking at my birds, and asking questions about those which took her fancy. Pointing with her finger, she said, "What is that—that *thing* up there?" "A *Struthidea*," I replied. "A er-r-r, what?" "A *Struthidea*; a Grey *Struthidea* from Australia." "Yes, yes," she rejoined petulantly, "but what is its *name*? what is it called *generally*?" "The Grey *Struthidea*," I blandly remarked. "But hasn't it any *other* name?" And the only *other* name I could give was *Struthidea cinerea*, which did not tend to soothe her irritation. She seemed to think that I was humbugging her, or wanted to show off, for she was unable to comprehend that the species has not any simple English name.

One day in the spring of 1900, a clerical gentleman, who lives next door, and has the benefit of the dulcet (and other) strains that proceed from my aviary, who has many an ear for music but hardly an eye for a bird, was with us taking tea. "What bird is it," he asked "that has such a pleasing bubbling

note, like the rippling of running water?" "Oh, that will be the Pied Grallina," I replied. "I beg your pardon?" "The Grallina; the Pied Grallina; that handsome black and white bird which waves and folds its wings so curiously as it utters a wild, almost Curlew-like, cry." He shifted uneasily in his chair, and again suggested that he would like to know the name; but I could only add, "*Grallina picata*; or *Grallina australis*, as it is called by the Zoological Society." The gentleman was *not* satisfied; but he had too much self control to unseemingly betray that he was annoyed, and too much courtesy to pursue the matter further. Even Mrs. Phillipps, with all her advantages of close companionship with the bird, a great favourite of hers, has not taken kindly to his name, but calls him Agricola; and by his name of Agricola he is always known between ourselves.

The Grallina is known in Australia as the Little Magpie, to distinguish it from "The Magpie," as the several species of Piping Crows are indiscriminately called; and I am inclined to think, but am not sure, that it is identical with the "Mud Lark" of some parts of the Australian Continent. The names are not recognised in this country, however, and rightly not, for they are misleading, as the bird has nothing of the Magpie about it but the pied coat, and nothing whatever of the Lark that I can perceive.

Since his last moult, my Grallina has been an exceptionally handsome bird, and as graceful and elegant as he is handsome. The white body and other parts are of the purest white, and the blue-black glossy and brilliant. A specimen of the species, likewise a male, may be seen in the Western Aviaries at the Zoological Gardens—if nothing has happened to him since I was there last. We each obtained a pair in 1899; but neither female recovered from the effects of the journey, &c., whilst each male keeps in perfect health and condition.

On 21st August, 1900, I secured a pair of very active, lively, short-legged, uncommon looking birds of a species which, I think, has not been seen in this country for many years. It comes from the Himalayas, and is of a chestnut-red colour set off with black and a touch of white, of rather small size, and goes bobbing and bounding about the aviary like an India-rubber ball, sometimes with the head, oftentimes with the tail, uppermost. The sexes are nominally alike, and both are attractive, the male conspicuously so when he raises his crest and salutes his lady, or holds himself up by her side in stately dignity; and he is quite a musical box in the variety of his call notes and warblings

when the two get accidentally separated. Their favourite occupation before the winter set in seemed to be darting into the air after the smallest gnats and winged insects, which they practically never failed to catch; but they mainly rely on their spring for taking their prey, never flying like a Flycatcher. Although often visiting low thickets, they rarely go actually on to the ground, unless momentarily after water or some insect. They are fond of grapes, and know a good pear when they meet with one.

I doubt if these birds would be an unmixed joy in a cage, or even in a small aviary, because of their restless disposition and nervous temperament; and for some weeks after their arrival I feared they would prove to be a nuisance. But now that they have settled down, it is quite different, and if possible I grow fonder of them every day. Their great affection for one another is a pleasing trait to note; and in this and other ways they betray affinity with the smaller Jay-Thrushes. They are very noticeable, and seldom fail to attract the attention of visitors, and "Oh! what *is* that bird!" in one form or another, is the usual cry. In vain I assure my friends that it is a Sibia, the Black-headed Sibia (*Sibia capistrata*; or *Malacias capistrata*, as per Cat. Birds Brit. Museum) from India. They vacantly remark, "Yes, it has a black head," and add, under their breath, various improper words. Mrs. Phillipps, in this case also, from the first declined to recognise the title of Sibia; but she knows all about the Sibyls,—and as a Sibyl is the bird usually spoken of here.

It seems to me that we make a mistake by failing to give the birds, as far as practicable, simple English names, not names which are misleading and disseminate error, such as "Hedge Sparrow," "Mud Lark," and "Little Magpie," nevertheless names that can be taken hold of and remembered, comfortably handled, and carried to our homes. We ought to try and lift our less fortunate brothers and sisters above the "Dickie-bird" level, and induce them to take an intelligent interest in our feathered friends, and not choke them off with Struthideas, Grallinas, Sibias, and a host of such like titles. A similar thought (page 61), or one akin to it, seems to have been forced upon the mind of our enthusiastic fellow aviculturist Miss Alderson, by the trouble and inconvenience occasioned her, and doubtless others, through the English language being sometimes ignored in our Magazine. I once heard a cabinet naturalist affirm that he did not know a species by what some are pleased to call its trivial name. But that is not true aviculture; it is much the

reverse. No one can admire and value the study of other languages, dead or otherwise, and the importance, nay, the necessity, of scientific classification and nomenclature, more than I do, but I fail to see eye to eye with those who speak slightly of their own mother tongue. And we should not act so as to disgust and repel the embryo aviculturist, but rather do the best that may be done to win and assist him.

Let us close by returning to the original line of thought,—and admit that it is now impossible to do much towards simplifying the names of certain foreign birds; nevertheless we may well keep the idea before our minds, and act accordingly should any opportunity of doing so present itself (*a*).

## EFFECTIVE SIMPLE BIRD TRAPS.

By ARTHUR G. BUTLER, Ph.D.

Now that the purchase of even the commoner British birds has been rendered difficult, owing to the many and perplexing local restrictions which have grown out of the Wild Birds' Protection Act, the only chance of the British aviarist is to be his own bird-catcher: this he can only hope to be upon his personal property, so that the idea of clap-nets and even bat-fowling nets must (unless he be a large lauded proprietor) be set aside.

In the early days of my bird keeping, before I had come across a bird-catcher, and long before the utopian fiction that the preservation of a few thousand birds in the British Isles would affect their permanent representation on our shores, had gained ground with a gullible public; I used to catch all the commoner birds with two very simple, cheap, and easily made traps, known as the box-trap and caravan-trap.

Before describing these contrivances, it will perhaps save future discussion if I point out that only in severe weather, when our wild birds are dying from starvation, are any traps of much use; and to catch and care for birds at such times (far from being cruel) is the greatest kindness that you can show them. It is well-known that birds are purely animal in their passions and desires; therefore, in a good-sized aviary, where they can carry on a natural life without the dangers of absolute

---

(*a*.) I am quite at one with Mr. Phillipps in this opinion; indeed I go further, for I think it our duty not to accept nonsense names for any bird for which we can suggest a descriptive name: on this ground I have objected to the terms 'Picui' dove, 'Picuzuro' pigeon, &c. as conveying no meaning to Englishmen.—A. G. B.

freedom, they are far more likely to pass a happy existence than if subjected to all the risks and torments which untrammelled Nature provides for her children.

In the second place, as regards the protection of wild birds; if those who imagine that the prevention of birdsnesting, bird-catching, (as practised in Great Britain during the past century), or even shooting (as practised by ornithologists) is of any avail, would only study the subject and reflect a little, they would see that this notion is utterly ridiculous: as well might they believe that the sands of the sea shore might be exhausted by the efforts of trippers' children with their toy pails. Those who can credit such nonsense can have no conception of the countless myriads of birds which pass over our Islands every spring, and only pass away from us because we have destroyed and are still destroying the natural homes in which they once delighted. By denying the aviculturist the pleasure of studying British birds in cage and aviary, the peasantry of Italy and Spain have a few more Nightingales, Robins, Skylarks, and other sweet singers to eat; but we gain nothing for England excepting blind faith in an ever receding millennium of bird life. It is pretty certain that bird life in our country was never so varied or so prolific as during the Middle Ages, when every male, so soon as he could toddle, began to make war upon the feathered family; when every ingenious contrivance for their capture was used both by day and night throughout the year.

The box-trap which is very effective in the capture of Blackbirds, Thrushes, and many of the small birds of our gardens costs about threepence to construct. You get an ordinary deal box from a grocer for about 1½d., taking care that you get the lid with it. The latter you saw across at about three-fifths of its length, nailing down the longer length, across the centre of the underside of the shorter length; you screw a lath which projects about half its length behind the wood and is bevelled off at the end; the loose portion of lid is then put in position and hinged with thin leather or even tape tacked on each side. An ordinary penny wire spring with one end fastened through the edge of the lid, and the other carried from within outwards through the side of the box, so as to keep the lid firmly closed, completes the trap, which then only requires a crutch with a notch cut in it to be ready for use.

To set the trap the lid is raised, the end of the crutch rested against the end of the box inside, the fork being under the opening, the end of the lath which crosses the lid is inserted



in the notch, and the spring retains all in position : either stand on a step or bury in the earth, sprinkling fine breadcrumbs outside—and large inside the trap : as the bird jumps down he knocks away the crutch and the lid closes. A small piece of glass let into the back of the trap is advantageous, as it enables you to see what you have caught : I used to set these traps overnight, and sometimes found various species of mice in them in the morning.

The caravan-trap is based upon a sixpenny iron hoop with one portion flattened, so that it represents an elongated D ; across this, from the two corners to the opposite sides, are bent two wires arching somewhat and united in the centre ; over these and fastened all round the hoop is string netting. Inside and loosely wired to the corners of the D at its extremities is an arch formed of a bent apple-twigg or strip of thin cane ; a crutch, and a second piece of apple-twigg complete the trap.

To set this trap the flat back of the D is loosely fastened to the earth by iron hooks or bent wire ; the crutch is firmly driven into the earth outside of and just beyond centre of the ring ; the latter is raised at an angle of about 45 degrees, the inner ring is also held about two inches above the earth : this is easily done by inserting one end of the loose apple-twigg through the front of the netting over the fixed crutch, then back and behind the edge of the lower hoop. Crumbs are thrown inside, and the birds release the sustaining apple-twigg as they pass over the lower hoop, a touch of the tail being often sufficient.

One advantage of the caravan trap is that it rarely catches old birds : these are too cunning, and leap clean over the lower hoop, take a good feed and hop back again. To make sure of them, in spite of this trick, one has to lay two slender twigs across from the lower hoop to the centre.

The caravan-trap is admirable for most of our common garden songsters, but unfortunately one has to watch it constantly on account of the Starlings. No birds are so utterly foolhardy as Starlings, and no sooner is your trap set than in they go, sometimes three together, and seem quite astonished when they find themselves under a net. I caught thirteen one morning, turned them all together into a large cage, and in the morning when they were quieter I selected the three best and let the others fly ; later I selected the best of the three and kept him for show : he was the most perfectly-formed Starling I ever saw—a long close-feathered active snaky bird ;—but I did not force him into colour before his time, therefore he was ignored in

favour of two squat unnatural looking birds (in breeding plumage in early February): that experience sickened me finally of keeping British birds for show-purposes: natural birds are a bit off colour now-a-days at our shows, yet I believe my Starling has been a winner since he left my hands.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

---

### AVICULTURAL NOTES.

SIR,—The first number of the "Avicultural Magazine" published in the new century is graced by three most interesting articles, written by ladies, members of the Society. This is indeed a good beginning.

Lady Dunleath mentions her Californian Quails: which reminds me of my experience with these pretty inmates of my outdoor aviary. I had a pair which lived in a garden aviary stocked with Canaries. The hen Quail began to lay eggs, and I made her a nest of sods of turf in a corner and under cover. The cock bird was much interested in this nest and used to sit on its rim, but the hen laid an egg daily, anywhere on the ground, except in the nest. These eggs were daily put in the nest, which the cock bird watched faithfully.

I forget now whether eleven or thirteen eggs were laid. But the hen showed no inclination to sit, and one day the cock sat down on the eggs and remained there, hatching the whole brood; and when the chicks came out he fed them as carefully as any hen would do, rearing the whole lot. I believe this case is by no means unique, probably not even rare, but it is a curious and pretty sight. The young Californian Quails are very small, and run about as quickly as mice.

As food for newly-hatched birds, I found it an excellent plan to send my gardener into the fields to dig up an anthill and put the earth, ants, and larvæ into a bag, which was emptied in the aviary. The old and the young birds scratched and hunted for ants' eggs and ants, and ate both with great delight and advantage. For very young birds I would prefer the yolk of fresh boiled eggs to the preserved yolk. The latter is very good, but the former is perhaps more digestible for the tender stomachs of newly-hatched birds.

Writing about preserved eggs reminds me of something which may interest some of the readers of the Magazine. I believe I am the innocent inventor of this preserved egg-food. It happened as follows:—When the brilliant coal-tar aniline dyes were brought out they were very costly, and chiefly used for printing delicate flower designs on muslins, destined to become ladies' summer frocks. To thicken and fix these colours, egg albumen was used, as being the most suitable gum and not affecting the most delicate tints. The white of eggs, when boiled, becomes a white leathery insoluble mass; but when dried at a slow heat, it becomes a very fine soluble gum, which is pure albumen. A friend of mine bought annually millions of eggs in Hungary, to make albumen from the white, but did not know what to do with the yolk of the eggs. He offered it by the hundred-weight and the ton to pastry cooks and to leather dressers; he tried to salt it, and he tried

to invent candied yolk of eggs; but nobody would have it. I suggested to him to preserve the yolk by simply evaporating the moisture in it at a low heat, and in a chamber from which the air was exhausted, whereby very rapid evaporation at a low heat without the alteration of chemical combination of substances, resulting from cooking, becomes possible. My friend acted on the suggestion, and the product entirely answered my expectation of proving a very useful food for rearing pheasants, bringing up chickens, and as a food for cage birds. Where the thus-preserved yolk of eggs is now made, I do not know: the albumen is supplanted by cheaper materials, although the Chinese offer it at a fraction of the price for which it is made in Europe, and the Hungarian eggs are sent to London in their shells.

Pray excuse this digression.

AUG. F. WIENER.

### GOULDIAN FINCHES.

SIR,—Amongst all the suggestions offered for the treatment of the Gouldian Finch, I never see the use of rock salt recommended. I always keep my Gouldians, both in cage and aviary, supplied with a lump; and frequently splash a little water over it, and the birds quickly descend from their perches and lick the moistened surface with their tongues.

As to 'green food,' my Gouldians eat freely chickweed and shepherd's purse (when in seed), also the annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), the tufts of which may be pulled up by the roots in any ill-kept pathway, at any time of the year. A little egg-shell, crushed into small bits in the hand and thrown upon the ground, is also much appreciated. I have great faith in rock salt, and plenty of lime in the shape of cuttle-bone and egg-shell; and I never have a case of egg-binding. My birds are all in first-rate condition and colour, and the young ones invariably acquire the adult plumage at their first moult.

W. H. ST. QUINTIN.

### LAVENDER FINCHES.

SIR,—I have pleasure in replying to Mr. Phillipps' query in the January Magazine as to the colours of my hen Lavender Finch.

I have never found the colour of the plumage a distinguishing mark of the sexes. The breeding hen that died was just the same colour as the cock bird. Many Lavenders, after moulting, assume a much deeper shade (for a short time) than before—sometimes the plumage is quite sooty.

A much surer test is the size and build of the bird. As far as my experience goes, the cock is always both *larger* and *longer*; the hen is invariably smaller and much rounder looking. It is hard to see the difference if you look at the birds singly, but when together the contrast is immediately apparent.

Mr. Phillipps may be interested to hear that my lame Shama, "Phil," is in lovely plumage. He is very well and cheerful, and just getting into song. His leg was broken so close to the body that it seemed impossible to bind it; and, as he refused to eat and seemed gradually sinking, we thought that the only chance of saving him was to have the leg amputated.

I was much interested in Mr. Phillipps' article on "Accidents." If he would kindly tell us *how* he bandages the broken limb, and if he uses

anything as a splint, I am sure it would be most useful information to many members of the Society.

ROSIE ALDERSON.

### THE PIED GRALLINA.

SIR,—I noticed that, in his article upon "Accidents," in the January "Avicultural Magazine," Mr. R. Philipps mentioned that he had got a hen Pied Grallina. I should be glad if he, or any of your readers, would kindly inform me if they are easily procurable now, and if they are good birds for Exhibition purposes.

In the end of 1898, I procured a pair through the Keeper of the Western Aviary at the Zoo; and I understood from him at the time that my birds and a pair at the Zoo were the only living specimens in the country. I also remember seeing a young pair (*♂*) advertised in the "Avicultural Magazine," in 1899.

I am sorry to say that I missed shewing mine at the Crystal Palace in 1899, and that they both died before I had shewn them elsewhere.

CHAS. CUSHNY.

*The following reply has been sent to Mr. Cushny :*

Excepting my own bird, which I advertised some months ago because it was noisy and shewed an inclination to peck at other inmates of the aviary, I doubt if a single specimen of the Pied Grallina has been offered for sale in this country since 1899. Probably my bird, and the one at the Zoological Gardens if still to the fore, are the only living specimens in the United Kingdom at the present moment.

You seem to be one year out in your dates, as it was in 1899, not 1898, that some of these Grallinas arrived in England. Moreover, my bird is a male. If you will kindly refer again to the article quoted, you will see that the sex is not mentioned. The sexes are readily distinguishable as—not to mention other points of difference—in the male, the forehead and throat are black, in the female, white.

In another article, forwarded to the Editor a few days ago, I have again referred to this species, giving some further particulars that may interest you. I am glad to be able to say that my Grallina has quite given up pecking at its neighbours, and is now a general favourite. It makes a capital *aviary* bird, and keeps its plumage splendidly; nevertheless I cannot think that the Pied Grallina would be a good bird for Exhibition purposes. It is nervous, a very shy feeder, and does not seem to be able to stand much knocking about. It is perpetually hovering and floating about in the air, or stalking about on the ground, and is, in my opinion, quite unsuitable for cage life.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

### ORNAMENTAL WATERFOWL.

SIR,—We have had very few articles in the Magazine on this branch of aviculture; but I feel sure there must be many of our members who are interested in the numerous beautiful species of foreign Waterfowl, most of which may be kept in captivity in this country with little trouble, and will well repay their owner by their charming ways and great beauty.

(*♂*). No; only a male.—R. P.

A most useful little work by the Hon. Rose Hubbard, entitled "Ornamental Waterfowl," was published in 1888, but is now out of print so that probably few of our members have seen it. I was very glad to read in the "Bazaar," of Jan. 9th last that, as a great many enquiries have been received for this work since the old edition was exhausted, the author would bring out a new and enlarged edition if sufficient promises of support were received to make it worth her while. The old edition contained an account of every known species at the time, with full directions for their successful management in captivity; and if a new edition is brought out, it will doubtless be quite up to date.

It seems to me that it would be a great pity if the author were compelled to abandon the idea of bringing out the new edition for lack of a suitable number of subscribers, for we can ill afford to miss this opportunity of adding a really useful work to our avicultural libraries.

All correspondence on the subject should be addressed to the Hon. Rose Hubbard, Seven Gables, Winslow, Bucks. D. SETH-SMITH.

#### KINGFISHERS.

SIR,—At a recent Welsh Show I saw a very lovely young specimen of the Common Kingfisher, in splendid condition and remarkably steady, which, I was informed, was only one of 13 (or 18) young birds caught and brought to maturity by the exhibitor. They are rather plentiful on our Welsh rivers, but I assume they are difficult to tame and keep in captivity.

If any member would like one, I could doubtless procure it at a reasonable price, and would willingly try. J. VINER LEEDER.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF AFRICAN BIRD.

SIR,—I have received the enclosed bird-skin from a nephew, who is some distance inland near Lovada, on the Portuguese West Coast of Africa. Can you give me the name of it in the next issue of the "Avicultural Magazine?" I have written him to bring me a live specimen, if at all possible, when next he visits Europe.

Some years ago he brought me some specimens of Wiener's Finches and Violet-eared Waxbills amongst some common birds. He left Lovada with about 150 and brought about sixty alive. He, however, knew nothing of the treatment of birds, but has since taken an interest in them.

F. MOERSCHHELL.

*The following reply has been sent to Mr. Moerschell.*

Your bird, as I supposed when I received it, is one of the African Cuckoos (*Chrysococcyx smaragdineus*) of Swainson.

From the form of the bill, the bird is probably largely insectivorous, and would, I should think, be no more difficult to import than a Bulbul.

A. G. BUTLER.

N.B.—I did not keep a copy of my reply, but believe the above to be about what I said.—A. G. B.

## BIRDS NOT YET BRED IN CAPTIVITY.

SIR,—I shall be very much obliged if you could let me have a short list of the commoner kept birds which have not yet been bred in this country, as I am anxious to win the medal.

Has the Dhyal-bird been bred in captivity?

R. FRANKLIN-HINDLE.

*The following reply has been sent to Mr. Hindle.*

It would need a great deal of work to make a list of the commoner birds which have not been bred in this country. In the finches, less has been done with Whydahs and Weavers than with any others.

Mr. Farrar (in Vol. V. of the Magazine) told us that he had hatched out Dhyal-birds; but whether he has succeeded in rearing any I cannot say: probably not, or we should have heard of it. (c)

The Yellow Wagtail and some of our English Warblers would be good species to experiment with: I have not heard of their being bred in captivity in Great Britain.

A. G. BUTLER.

## BLACK-HEADED CONURES.

SIR,—Are Black-headed Conures rare? as they are not mentioned in Dr. Greene's book on Parrots. Where do they come from, and would they be likely to nest if placed in a room with other birds?—M. M. HAMILTON.

*The following reply has been sent to Mrs. Hamilton.*

In answer to your question, the Black-headed Conure is not a rare bird, to judge from the frequency of its inclusion in the advertisements of dealers as the "Nenday Parakeet."

The fact that it is not described in Dr. Greene's book is probably due to the said work never having been completed. According to the Catalogue of the British Museum the habitat of the *Conurus nenday* is Paraguay.

I should think Conures most unlikely to breed in a room with other birds, and I should not be inclined to trust small birds with them.

O. E. CRESSWELL.

## GERMAN ARTIFICIAL LOG-NESTS FOR PARRAKEETS.

SIR,—I have a catalogue, from a German firm, of beautiful nest-boxes, but I think it is a shame and a disgrace that we should go to Germany for such. Can any member give the name of a person who would turn these nests for us? They are made of spruce fir and very easily formed. I feel quite certain that many of us would be glad to buy such, but if we cannot get them made here I shall be glad to hear of any who would join me in an importation.

Quantities of Parrakeets' eggs are spoilt by being laid on a flat surface: they get scattered about instead of being all in a bunch, as they would be if

(c). Mr. Farrar's Dhyals, judging by his own account, were not fully reared as required by our regulations; but the species was successfully bred, many years ago, by the London Zoological Society.—R. P.

the nest was cup-shaped as in the nest-logs (*d*). I have myself lost a sitting this year through no other cause, and I know others have done likewise. Two or three shillings would have put as many pounds into the aviculturist's pockets.

JAMES COOPER.

### SMALL FOREIGN BIRDS AND OTHERS OUT OF DOORS.

SIR,—I quite agree with Mr. Page that all foreign seed-eating birds do much the best out of doors, all the year round; also that thickly-planted aviaries are far and away the best, for they not only afford natural shelter from the elements, but also screen the birds from observation and so induce them to breed. Mr. Farrar's wonderful success should be proof enough for anyone: I am now taking a leaf out of his book, and planting some of my aviaries as thickly as I can.

I do not war with the elements, for I can't say that they do me a great deal of harm; but I do war with the mice, and these I find my great enemy, for they not only disturb the birds, but they eat up the seed and, moreover, they kill the young and suck the eggs. My cat is ready every morning and follows me when I go to feed the birds, for she well knows where a good feed is likely to turn up, and she generally gets it.

I find little gin traps far the best for catching mice but, of course, you can't set them inside the aviary unless they are covered up. Sunflower seeds are the best baits for mice.

For indoor bird-rooms, I have noticed that it is necessary to have the top lights, if any, of a flat pitch: the sun's rays do not then strike at such an angle as to overhear the place, as they will do if at a pitch such as is usual in a greenhouse. I once saw a greenhouse with a very flat roof, and the plants did simply splendidly in it; they were close up to the glass, and the sun did not burn them; moreover, the temperature could be better regulated, and there was not the burning up in the day nor starvation at night. It is just the same in a bird-room with top lights.

I have just invested in Dr. Butler's excellent book on foreign birds. I find he recommends artificial heat in winter, and I fancy a good many will not agree with him on this point. His idea of fountains with glass receivers sounds nice and clean; but what about frost, and where is the foothold for the birds? His cement sides a foot high and faced with tiles I consider quite useless—I mean as to the tiles; the cement is all right and should go well into the ground to prevent vermin undermining it; but mice can easily jump a foot high, so tiles would only be a waste of expense. Summer and Winter quarters are not necessary so long as a good shed is provided, with plenty of branches and furze bushes hung about, and plenty of trees, bushes, and evergreens are planted in the foreground.

JAMES COOPER.

### A NESTING PARROT.

SIR,—It may interest your readers to hear of a nest built by a Parrot while at liberty

The bird was found in the forest with a clipped wing and was kept

(*d*). Mr. Abrahams always has a supply of these nest-logs in stock.—R. P.

for some months in a cage. Last June it escaped, and its feathers having grown again, it flew to a farm belonging to Mr. W. F. Rawnsley, of Park Hill, Lyndhurst, where it has remained flying about the place and feeding with the fowls. During the summer it set about building a kind of nest on the thatched roof of the farm house, nipping off long twigs of hawthorn for the purpose from a hedge near at hand. Since the colder weather began, the bird has greatly added to this nest, and uses it as a shelter, often lying in it by day and always sleeping in it.

The nest is now a tunnel, about 18 inches deep, coming straight out from the thatch, and partly supported by a chimney stack. It has a cup-shaped opening about the size of a cocoa-nut. It is very firmly and compactly woven, and is entirely made of hawthorn twigs. High winds do not affect it, and rain cannot beat into it; the only thing to be feared is a heavy fall of snow.

I suppose the bird to be *Psittacus murinus* (c); its colouring and general appearance agree with the description of that species by Bechstein, except that this bird's tail is certainly more than five inches long, nearer eight, I should think. Though shy with strangers, it is quite tame to the farmer's wife, and will feed from her hand.

I shall be glad if you can tell me:—

1st. Is it usual for *Psittacus* to build nests of this description?

2nd. If the nest is only a shelter, or whether, if a mate could be obtained, the birds would be likely to breed in it?

3rd. Is there any difference in the plumage of the sexes, and is this one likely to be a cock or hen bird?

4th. Can it survive an ordinary winter in a sheltered spot in the South of England?

ETHEL F. CHAWNER.

---

*The following reply has been sent to Miss Chawner.*

Miss Chawner's letter is very interesting. I have no doubt the Parrot is the one she supposes, viz., *Myopsittacus monachus*, as the British Museum Catalogue calls it. This is the way it builds. I should expect it to be a female. It would, no doubt, be quite hardy. Were a mate provided, they would probably breed. I should advise a cock bird being hung up near when it is warmer.

I am not aware of any difference in the sexes. F. G. DUTTON.

---

#### TREATMENT OF SMALL FOREIGN BIRDS IN WINTER.

SIR,—For the encouragement of anyone who, like myself, cannot manage to give their little birds artificial light, I should like to record the fact, that I have for some years kept the little Waxbills and exotic Finches successfully, with no other light than that which the sun bestows—which certainly is not much just now.

When I first started my bird room, the birds I had were all confined in cages, and I gave myself a good deal of trouble and anxiety in providing artificial light for them, as I was quite under the impression that our long winter nights would be too much for them otherwise.

---

(c). The familiar Quaker or Grey-breasted Parrakeet.—R. P.



Another winter came, and by that time my birds had increased in number, and I had improved their room so that the tiny inoffensive ones might fly free—this added to my difficulty in safely providing them with candles—I had no gas at that time and considered lamps dangerous, my bird room being some distance from the house.

I ventured to consult a gentleman—a member of our present Society—whom I had previously found most kind and courteous in giving me advice and answering my questions, although I was, at that time, a complete stranger to him. He thought artificial light unnecessary, and laid stress on the fact that, during the time of rest, food was not required. Gladly acting on this opinion, I left my little birds to nature, and have found, so far, that really through the dark winter time I have lost fewer than at other times. Indeed, I do not recall one death during the darkest period, either last winter or that before. I have found the early spring more trying. This is the fourth winter they have had no artificial light.

My little room is now warmed by one of Mr. Abrahams' stoves (gas), and the temperature is seldom much over 50 deg. in winter. I think myself fortunate when the thermometer keeps up to 45 deg. during the night. When the weather is *really* winterly it goes down a good many degrees, and was below 40 many of the cold nights last February. But my Gouldian Finch did not appear to suffer, neither did a hen Corden Bleu, nor any of the tiny Waxbills.

I keep the Gouldians and a few other delicate birds in large cages, and cover the tops and about nine inches of the fronts at night with baize; this makes a warm shelter for the little things to sleep under, and leaves the rest of the cage to benefit from the first rays of light in the morning.

Some of the little mites which fly free like to creep under the baize at the top of a Crystal Palace Aviary; some perch on the nursery guard which protects the stove, and others go into the rush nests provided for them.

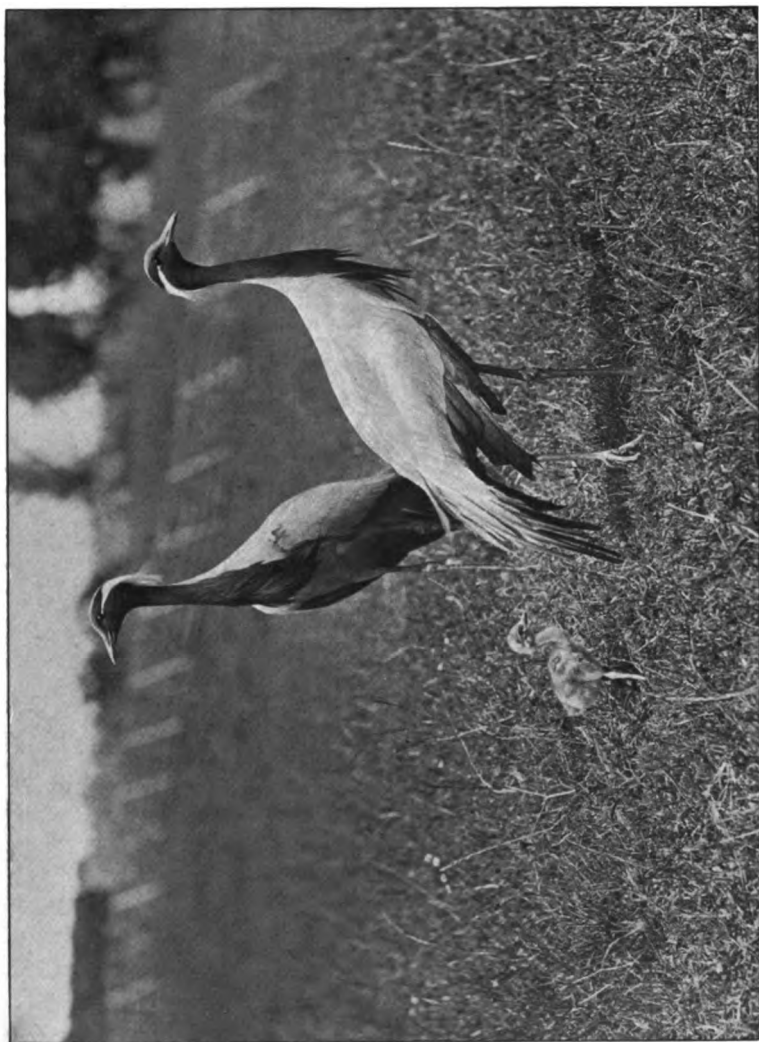
All religiously go to bed with the sun. At this time (Dec. 29th) I pay them their good-night visit punctually at 10 minutes before 4 o'clock, and find all the free members of my feathered family assembled at that time on the feeding shelf, busily engaged in eating a good supper.

If I am many minutes making the arrangements for the night, I have the pleasure of seeing them all retiring to bed, and find each individual little bird is most jealous over his *own* sleeping place and very impatient if I get in his way. I do not think any of them would be at all pleased if I disturbed them with lamps or candles. This letter sounds egotistical from a writer who can lay no claim to scientific knowledge—much as she respects that knowledge in others—but there may be members of our Society, who have had less experience than myself, to whom it may be a comfort to know that it is quite possible to keep their little pets indoors during the winter, without providing light for them at night.

At the time of writing, I have a little Orange-cheeked Waxbill in my room which has been in my possession 8 years and 4 months.

E. E. WEST.





DEMOISELLE CRANES AND YOUNG.  
*Grus virgo*.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**  
BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 5.

*All rights reserved.*

MARCH, 1901.

---

**DEMOISELLE CRANES.**

By the Hon. **GERALD LASCELLES.**

A few notes as to the nesting of my Demoiselle Cranes may perhaps interest readers of the "Avicultural Magazine," even though no successful result was attained; and possibly some of the members may be able to give me a few hints as to the best steps to take for rearing the young, should my Cranes lay again this year.

I procured these Cranes from a London dealer in November, 1898. They were rather rough in feather but in good health. I turned them out, closely pinioned of course, in the small park or field of about six acres which is in the front of this house. They settled down in a very short time and have thriven well ever since. They share this field (in which there is a small pond) with a number of poultry and a small collection of water-fowl. With these they agree very well and neither species interferes with the other. Their food is much the same as that of the fowls—viz., maize, wheat, broken dog biscuit, and scraps from the house. In summer they practically maintain themselves, but in winter they will come readily to the whistle for food, and are quite as tame as the game fowls running with them.

They moulted out beautifully in 1899, and, except for being pinioned, were in absolutely perfect plumage. Their loud but not unmusical note is most frequent when rain or a change of weather is impending; at such times they become restless and inclined to try to take wing. And there is always a chorus from the two of them at the extreme close of the day just before darkness sets in, which the whole household recognises as the "evening hymn."

In 1899 they gave no signs of breeding, nor was there any apparent difference between the two that would enable me to form an opinion as to whether they were a pair or not. But in the spring of last year we noticed certain gestures on the part

of one bird which decidedly looked as if a cock bird was playing up to a hen. They are both, however, so fond of jumping and dancing absurd quadrilles with each other that it was not easy to be certain as to these movements.

On one of the last days of April, however, an egg made its appearance. It was laid on the bare ground without any pretence at a nest, and in the centre, and most exposed part of the park. Had it not been that one or other bird stood sentry over it, the egg might have escaped notice. However, three days afterwards the second egg made its appearance, and in two days more, regular incubation commenced. We then put a few hurdles round the nest to protect it from cows, etc., and this did not disturb the birds at all. Both parents took their turn at sitting with great regularity, but the lion's share was allowed to fall to the hen, while the cock stood sentry and did his best to drive off any intruders. Their actions, when any strangers entered the field, were most interesting. The hen—or whichever bird was sitting—would immediately leave the nest, and, just calling to the other, would walk quietly and unconcernedly away as if there was no nest and nothing interesting inside the hurdles. But if the stranger approached nearer the birds would return closer, and the hen would flutter away along the ground as if both wings were broken, crawling slowly in front of him right to the fence of the field. But if this device failed, the cock would throw off all disguise, and, if the intruder approached the nest, would boldly attack him with wings spread and feathers erect, screaming loudly the while; he would strike with his bill at a man; and a cow or strange dog would be fairly hustled off the premises in terror.

The eggs were very large considering the size of the Crane's body, almost as large as a turkey's egg, and in colour very like those of the Green Plover, except that the dark brown markings at the larger end were not so large or so distinct. They lay always side by side, the smaller ends both pointing the same way.

Incubation was steadily carried on for twenty-eight days, and on May 30th the first young Crane appeared. Its advent was heralded by the close sitting of the mother, and the positive fury of the sire if any living thing drew near the nest. The quitting of the eggs and feigned lameness were abandoned, but were made up for by the violence of the protecting guard. On the following day, May 31st, the second egg hatched, this bird being rather weaker than the first.

The appearance of the young was (except for the greater size) very much that of a young Green Plover, viz., a dark buff on the back shading off to cream colour, and with black or very dark brown markings. From the first few hours they followed the old birds all over the field just as chicks do their mother, but with this difference, that every scrap of food was, in the case of the Cranes, collected by the old bird and placed with the bill into the gaping mouth of the young. In this way they traversed the whole park, every moment collecting some insect and with it supplying the wants of the young birds running beside them. The difficulty, which I had foreseen from the first, would be to provide a sufficient supply of insect food to maintain the whole family. To assist this matter I imported ants' eggs in numbers, but the old Cranes seemed afraid of the ants among the eggs, and did not use them as I had hoped. We also gave them scalded meal mixed with egg, and in fact all forms of Pheasant food; but though the old Cranes would, under ordinary circumstances, gorge themselves with such diet, they only used it sparingly with the young birds. One of these, always weakly, added to its troubles by walking into the pond, unwatched by the parent that was also its guardian (for each one of these interesting birds took charge all the time of one chick, and devoted all its energies to the maintenance of its section). On the third day this weakly chick died; but its brother went on so bravely and strong that we all thought the trouble was over, and that for the first time on record the Demoiselle Crane would be reared in confinement.

But on about the tenth day he suddenly failed—from no evident cause, and without previous drooping. And by night-fall he was dead, but not before the interesting family group had been immortalised by the aid of the camera (*a*).

The difficulty no doubt was the insufficiency of proper food—insect food as it ought to be; unless a better plan would be to risk an enclosure of the birds while incubating and giving them abundance of custard, meal, and such food as they themselves love, on which to bring up their young without seeking to find their natural food by roaming all day. But would this answer for the young birds? And, failing this, how can I supplement the insect life of the soil so as to provide what evidently failed this year? It would probably answer better if this could be done; and, moreover, nothing could be more

---

(*a*). We have received a charming photo from the Author, which we hope to get reproduced for an early number of the Magazine.—O. E. C.

interesting than to watch the indefatigable work of the old Cranes as they collected every scrap of insect food on their way, while the little chicks kept running with open mouth to have each morsel dropped in as the old hunter captured it.

If your readers can give me any hints for guidance in the future that may, I hope, arise, I shall be supremely grateful (*δ*).

## THE SOLOMON ISLAND COCKATOO.

By the Rev. C. D. FARRAR.

In the July number of the "Avicultural Magazine" I saw an advertisement of two Red-eyed Cockatoos for sale. At first I took no notice; but about the middle of the month I bethought me of the Solomon Islanders, and wrote to ask, if still unsold, whether the owner would kindly let me hear about them. In reply I received a most courteous letter telling me that the birds were at least 18 years old; that for the last nine years they had been kept in a cage and were consequently in bad feather; that they destroyed a bundle of firewood every day; that they had just laid two eggs (at least the lady had); that they had been given cotton wool to make a nest with, and that either in intense indignation or utter disgust they had scattered eggs and material all over the cage bottom; that one egg had disappeared, and that the other had been sent to me. It came duly to hand, but was fractured; still it showed me the size and shape: it was about the same size as an ordinary Pigeon's egg, and rather obtuse in shape.

The gentleman said that, if I liked to have them, I could, and might keep them until either they got into form or went to nest again. In an unthinking moment, I closed with what I thought a most generous offer. From that day my sorrows began, and have continued with fair regularity ever since.

Before I tell you what they are like, I will make a digression. Full of wicked unsanctified pride, I wrote to my friend Mr. Savage to tell him of my good fortune. His reply was laconic and to the point. He thought that "if the hen had really laid on the bottom of a cage and used a nest of cotton wool, she ought to be relegated to the animal kingdom of asses"! and

(*δ*). A most interesting and valuable experience. May I suggest mealworms and cockroaches? It would be very difficult to obtain a full supply; but they would supplement the supply of natural food obtainable by the parents; and a few "carcasses" might be hung up, out of which the maggots would fall to the ground.—R. P.

I would suggest an abundance of earthworms and fine raw meat, but I have not had practical experience.—J. L. B.

he further expressed his opinion that "such an easy-minded bird ought to breed *anywhere*." Now I believe it was that last remark that decided me. I accordingly wrote and said I should be pleased to give the Cockatoos a trial—they have since given me not one but many!

About a week later a porter toiled up to the vicarage sad and weary, bearing a cage of Gargantuan Islanders' proportions covered with sacking, in which were the savages. I got them inside, undid the sacking, and the Solomons in lavender were revealed to view.

I may as well here say that they had been known in their past life as Solomon and Rose. I thought the latter name unsuitable; and, with a nice regard for Bible history, we re-named them Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Solomon I found was a gentleman of moderate size, about the same girth as a small Moluccan Cockatoo, but with a very red and evil looking eye, suggestive of drink; on his head he wears a beautiful sulphur-coloured crest, which he can erect at pleasure or anger; on his cheeks he has (although it sounds a bit Irish) a blush of sulphur colour; the rest of his person is snowy white with a dash of sulphur under the wings; strong and wicked looking feet complete the picture, set off by a beak that would break bars of iron in sunder. When in full dress, I have no doubt he will be rather a taking gentleman; but on arrival he was quite naked in the part where a City Alderman keeps "his corporation," and his shoulders were so bare that I thought of making him a coat.

Rose, or the Queen of Sheba as she now is, had a rather wild and scared look about her, as though, like the immortal Mrs. Gummidge, she was always on the worrit. She had also a decidedly undressed appearance about the neck; in fact she might have been some ancient duchess on her way to Court: for she showed a great deal of long and scraggy neck. She too had had a sulphur crest, but Solomon, apparently not approving of female finery or the order that "ladies going to Court must wear feathers," had partially removed it. This gave her a wild unearthly look, and, combined with a bold brown eye, gave her a very rakish appearance. The rest of her person was clothed in what should have been dazzling white, but which was, to put it mildly, a bit "off colour."

I hope I may be excused if I make a slight extract from their late owner's letter: "Two of our dogs are glad that Rose and Solomon have departed; as when the Cockatoos screeched



the bulldog would sit on the stairs and howl enough to take the roof off, and the toy black-and-tan would whine until tears ran down her face. It was quite a concert. A few years ago, when they wanted to nest, we wired off part of a bedroom and put great logs of wood in, and they enjoyed it tremendously. They picked the wall paper off in strips, and nibbled holes all round the frame work of the window; so we did not put them up there again." How I cried with laughter as I pictured that scene, described with such unconscious humour.

I wrote one day to their late owner pathetically bewailing their destructiveness. His answer was not encouraging. "I am not surprised at your account of the ruined aviary. When I first had the Cockatoos I wired off a large bay window in a spare bedroom, and, as I thought, protected every piece of woodwork with wire. Unless I had seen it I would never have believed the destruction done by the pair in a few hours. The window sashes were nibbled the whole length, and a broad board about nine inches under that around the ceiling had pieces out as large as a tea saucer. To this day I cannot imagine how they supported themselves in doing the mischief." (I can though. They hang *head downwards* and go to work.—C.D.F.) The letter continues, "Their seed was supplied in biscuit tins, and these had their sides torn out and flattened. They seemed possessed of the 'old gentleman,' and did this mischief out of pure cussedness. After all my time and trouble I was obliged to return them to their cage, for I believe they would otherwise have wrecked the house! About three years ago, when I was taking out the spaniels for a walk, the birds managed to undo the wire fastening of the cage. Rose (now the Queen of Sheba.—C. D. F.) went round the room knocking down ornaments, and Solomon got out at the French window. At that time the drainage was in progress, and at the opening opposite this house the cutting was thirty feet deep. Being the most dangerous part of the road, an old watchman was posted there. My wife asked if he would catch the bird; 'All right, mum,' he said, and hobbled after Solomon. Shortly after he cried out, 'I've got him, mum'—then there was a brief scuffle, accompanied by dreadfully sulphureous language; then he groaned aloud, and exclaimed, 'By —, he's got me!' He had, too, in the fleshy part of the palm of the hand, and hung on like a bulldog; even when we had managed to get him back into the cage he was still holding on. The man bled like a pig, and made the carpet in a nice mess."

However, I felt I was fairly in for it, and as they were

here I should have to make the best of it. It was not long before I learned to sympathise with that bulldog and toy spaniel.

When enquiring about a new continent, one naturally asks for its most remarkable product : I can safely say that in this case it is "the Voice." Those two Cockatoos could give points to any musician on the vexed question of voice production. When they are carrying on a quiet orderly conversation, it reminds you of a captain of an Atlantic liner giving his orders to the crew in a storm ; but when they get fairly roused up, excited—say over my appearance or yours—well, they would about wake the dead ! Sometimes, you know, when a friend tells you rather a tall tale, you say very quietly, "It's a bit too large for my belief hatch ; but if you can get it down yours, you are free and welcome to ship it." Well, I am telling the solemn truth when I say that I heard Solomon making some observations to his partner at our station, which is nearly a mile from the vicarage.

The Solomon Islander is a deeply trying creature, who, when you are in want of a quiet morning snooze and just as you have tucked the clothes up to your chin, serenades you until you feel positively wicked, and get up and throw things at him. What makes it so aggravating, not to say maddening, is that the brute never seems to be where you have thrown the things. You could swear he was just where you shied that empty soda water bottle, and instantly comes from the exactly opposite direction his "Weigh, weigh, weigh." He is a ventriloquist, and anyone experienced in Cockatoos soon finds that he is not driven away or destroyed by the artillery of missiles, but merely lies low until his victim has got into bed again, and then off he starts, as fresh as paint, with his "Weigh, weigh, weigh," in an ever increasing *crescendo*. Whether he is talking to his lady love or whether he wants me to come and fight him, I do not know, because my knowledge of Cockatese is limited ; but there are times when I don't talk to him "with a sweet mouth."

Sometimes people incautiously take liberties with Solomon, and try to scratch his head. They don't usually try a second time ! Solomon resents such liberties. A friend tried it once, and got scratched. He blamed me ! I said people should be very careful in handling strange Cockatoos ; and the scratched one profusely agreed with me, and said things I will not repeat, about "that fool of a bird."

Have you ever seen a very deaf old lady trying to hear what is said to her ? She puts up her ear trumpet and says, "Eh, my dear, what did you say : the house on fire ?" "No," you

yell; "It's—a—fine—day!" Well now, that just reminds me of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. "Wark!" he yells. "Wey," she replies, in a milder way with her head on one side. "Wark, wark, wark," he yells; "why-don't-you-listen-to-what's-said-to-you, you-old-idiot; if you are deaf why don't you go to a doctor?" And poor Sheba subsides—for a time.

I am rather vain of these Cockatoos; and I naturally desire to show them off, but meet with very little encouragement; indeed my friends say quaintly but forcibly that, if I do not get rid of them they shall leave, not the village merely but the county, and devote their remaining years to sweeping crossings in their native northern home; they say they would rather do this than face those birds again. Besides, they say, it is very unkind and unnecessary to make a fellow aviculturist go and say things which would only make things harder for him in the time to come.

In a future paper I hope to speak of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba in domestic life; but what that future will be I cannot tell.

---

## NOTES ON THE CRYSTAL PALACE BIRD SHOW, FEBRUARY, 1901.

By D. SETH-SMITH.

In the British Section, the first bird which especially interested me was a Lesser-Spotted Woodpecker shown by Mr. Maxwell. One frequently sees the Greater-Spotted species at Shows, but rarely the Lesser.

It seems absurd to have to show these two species in separate classes, but so long as the classes are divided according to the size of the birds, this separation is unavoidable. Again, when will the authorities understand that the word "variety" is a most unsuitable and incorrect term to use in connection with British birds. There are numerous varieties of the one species to which the fancy Canaries belong, and of other domestic creatures, varieties which are produced by man's ingenious and careful selections, but with wild birds the different kinds are each a distinct *species*, and varieties of these species are almost unknown.

Of much interest to lovers of British birds was the Wryneck shown in beautiful trim by Mr. C. T. Maxwell, and rightly awarded first prize. A Black Redstart in the same class was also interesting as being of comparatively rare occurrence

in these islands, and from the fact that, when it condescends to visit our shores, it is nearly always in the autumn or winter that it puts in an appearance. A Crested Tit which is hardly likely ever to have been wild in these islands was interesting, as was also a Blue-headed Wagtail, a species which, by the way, is less rare in this country than is usually supposed.

The Foreign Section commenced with the Whydahs and Weavers. There were two Red-collared Whydahs a species which one sees far more often at Shows now-a-days than formerly. A rare and pretty bird was the Red-headed Weaver sent by Mrs. C. Cooper, which was awarded second prize. The first prize was taken by two Weavers which looked uncommonly like two hens of distinct species, but the present writer is not well enough up in this family to say to what species they belonged.

There were two classes for Waxbills, one for the Common and the other the rarer kinds ; in the former the first prize was awarded to a pair of Cordon Bleus. Though very common and cheap there are few species more beautiful than this ; and, although it is usually considered a delicate species, it is, when once acclimatised, one of the hardiest of the African Waxbills, and will stand a considerable amount of cold.

In the class for the rarer Waxbills, a beautiful pair of Wiener's Waxbills (*Pytelia afra*) obtained the first prize, these being shown by Mr. L. W. Hawkins, who also sent a grand pair of Rufoustails and a Red-faced finch.

In the class for Gouldians, Parrot Finches and Pintail Nonpareils, the most interesting birds were the Tricoloured and Hybrid Parrot Finches. There were also common Parrot Finches, a beautiful Pintail Nonpareil and some Gouldian Finches.

The class for Grass Finches and Mannikins, not included elsewhere, was an interesting one, as it contained several rare birds. Probably the rarest exhibit was Mr. Hawkins' pair of Black-rumped Finches (*Stictoptera annulosa*), which were awarded third prize. The same exhibitor sent a charming pair of Cuba Finches and an equally good pair of White-eared Grass Finches, which obtained first and second respectively. The White-eared Grass Finch (*Poephila leucotis*) is to the writer's mind one of the nicest of the Grass Finches, and it is to be regretted that it is so seldom offered for sale now-a-days. Several pairs of the closely-allied Masked Finch (*P. personata*) were also shown by Mr. Hawkins, who has lately succeeded in breeding the species for the first time in this country. There were two

pairs of the White-breasted Maunikin (*Munia pectoralis*), a species which has recently become comparatively common, although formerly very rare.

Two interesting and uncommon exhibits were those of hybrids between Parson-finch and Bengalese, and Chestnut-finch and Bengalese, both sent by Mr. Hawkins, but for whom the foreign Finches at this Show would have been a poor lot indeed.

In the class for all species of Grosbeaks, True Finches and Buntings, not included elsewhere, the first and second prizes were awarded to Red-headed and Green Cardinals shown by Messrs. J. B. Housden and G. G. Henderson respectively, and the third to a very fine Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca cœrulea*) sent by Mrs. Galloway. The female of this species is very rarely imported, which is much to be regretted.

Swainson's Sparrows are uncommon in this country and therefore interesting, and the pair exhibited in this class were worth notice, as was a Red-headed Bunting, a Japanese Hawfinch, and a pair of European Black-headed Buntings.

In the class for Tanagers there were some lovely birds, including several specimens of the Blue-and-black, the Blue-headed and the Scarlet.

The Parrakeet class always has special attraction for me, and on this occasion there were some especially rare and beautiful specimens exhibited. First of all came Captain Sutton's beautiful Masked Parrakeet from Fiji, in perfect trim; then Mr. Hawkins's very neat and charming little hen Golden-Shoulder. By the way, all who are interested in the *Psephoti* should not fail to see the very beautiful hybrids between this species and the Many-coloured Parrakeet now in the Parrot-house at the "Zoo."

The Red-shining Parrakeet (*c*) sent by Captain Sutton was not quite perfect in plumage, but was nevertheless a very delightful bird and a very fair talker; I certainly think it should have been placed third and Mr. Hawkins' Turquoise fourth, instead of *vice-versa*.

There were besides, a good King and Queen, a pair of Pennants, and single specimens of the Redrump, Crimsonwing, Plumhead, &c.

In the class for Amazon and Grey Parrots the first prize was won by an exceptionally fine Grey sent by Mrs. R. Baptie, but Mr. Woodfield's Yellow-faced Amazon, which came second,

(c). Rightly or wrongly, I made this bird out to be a Tabuan (*Pyrrhuloxia tabuensis*).—R.F.

was equally fine and considerably rarer. A very good Grey came third ; and there were several others of the same species as well as some of the commoner Amazons shown.

Then came the class for Parrots not included above, and here a Red Macaw shown by Mr. H. B. Smith was awarded first prize ; the second being awarded to an exceptionally fine female *Eclectus* shown by Captain Sutton. There were also several Cockatoos, and three Kings which should have been in the Parrakeet class.

The last class, that devoted to all species not included elsewhere, was, I think, the most interesting of any, as it contained several birds of great rarity. Here Mr. T. H. Glasscoe took the three first prizes with a Regent Bower-bird, a Masked Woodswallow, and a Sacred Kingfisher. The first two of these were absolutely faultless, but the last looked rather sad in its close quarters, and very different to the smart, bright-eyed, tight-feathered bird he once was, when he had the run of the present writer's 36ft. outdoor aviary.

Mr. H. B. Smith exhibited two very fine Starlings, a Red-headed and a Purple-headed, both in very fine form, as well as a good Warty-faced Honey-eater.

## BRITISH BIRDS AT THE PALACE.

By J. LEWIS BONHOTE.

In point of entries, as in most other respects, the annual show at the Crystal Palace this year may be said to be a distinct improvement on its predecessors ; this, in the British Section, with which I am going to treat, is mainly due to the persevering efforts of the N. B. B. and M. C., a Society which deserves the support of all exhibitors of British birds. With the much more liberal classification, there were far fewer disqualifications owing to birds being entered in the wrong class ; the judging was also better, and the elementary mistakes in the knowledge of the birds, so conspicuous a feature some years ago, are now nearly eliminated. Taken as a whole, the birds themselves seemed to be of much better quality, and there were few birds that would not have been noticed in a local show, if they were not actually in the money. As regards rarity, we noticed an absence of the rarer Warblers and delicate birds, such as Willow Wrens, Long-tailed Tits, Gold-crests, etc., and, as these birds seldom looked really happy and well, their absence was rather an advantage than otherwise.

The first class which comes into my province is *Class 85*, A.O.V. Hybrid, bred from British birds. I noticed after leaving the show that I ought to have made some notes on one or two specimens in the former class, and am very sorry I did not do so as there was one bird in particular, *viz.*, Mr. C. J. Ward's Linnet-Bullfinch, which I should much like to have noticed. However, to return to *Class 85*, more than half were Greenfinch-Goldfinches and very handsome birds some of them were. They were all very much alike; in some the blaze was brighter, and in others the size and shape partook of one parent more than the other, but the markings were very similar in all; the breast, wings, and tail most resembled the Goldfinch, and the blaze was well marked in all; the back and head, however, showed their Greenfinch affinities. I would suggest that exhibitors be asked to state, where possible, in what way these birds were bred, *i.e.*, whether from a Goldfinch cock and Greenfinch hen, or *vice-versa*, as such notes would add greatly to their interest. The Greenfinch seems to be an easy bird with which to hybridise, as, in addition to those mentioned, we noticed several Linnet-Greenfinches in the class; and, in these cases, the Linnet affinities were mostly visible in the beak, sides and back, and the Greenfinch on the other parts.

1488 was a nice Linnet-Goldfinch, although it was not noticed; in size, shape, and colour of the back we recognise the Linnet parentage; the remainder resembled a Goldfinch, except in the absence of a blaze and the markings on the head.

1496 was a cock Blackbird with a cinnamon tendency, and had no relative among the Thrushes.

1489 (3rd) a Siskin-Redpoll, showed but little of the Siskin except in size and on the breast.

1502 (2nd) was a Linnet-Twite, a very unusual hybrid which, except for its shape and the colour of the beak, might well have passed for a Linnet.

*Class 86* (Bullfinch), and *87* (Goldfinch), were both very large classes, the judging of which must have been no slight work. All the birds were good, and we could not detect any foreigners among them. Some of the Goldfinches were spoilt by being colour-fed, although, we are glad to say, it did not in this class avail them much. Several "Extra" prizes were awarded, but not always, we venture to think, judiciously; there was, in our opinion, a great difference in the merit of Nos. 1585 and 1599, both taking a second prize.

*Class 88* (Chaffinch) was a nice class, but the majority

of the birds seemed to us very dark. No. 1664 (1st) was, however, a beauty, although rather wild.

*Class 89* (Linnet) was another large class with many good birds, Mr. Prior taking 1st with a splendid specimen, which was perhaps a little restless, but otherwise perfect. No. 1693 (4th) was a very dark bird, and should not, we think, have been in the money.

*Class 90* (Twite). This, if we mistake not, is a new class, and the entries quite justified its existence. Mr. Prior again takes 1st, though the 2nd prize bird ran it close; they were all rather wild.

*Class 91* (Lesser Redpoll). Formerly it used to be a rule that preference should be given to cage-moulted birds; and, although we can find no such rule now, it seems a pity that it should have been dropped. The 1st prize was in this case bestowed on the only "recently-caught" specimen, presumably on account of its red breast. The 2nd prize went to a beautiful Mealy! which should have been marked wrong class, and we are thus driven to Mr. Edwards' beautiful Lesser for the true champion of the class.

*Class 92* (Siskin) a nice clean class, the 1st prize going to a real beauty. There were many colour-fed monstrosities in this class, of which more anon.

*Class 93* (Brambling), *Class 94* (Hawfinch). These classes were both moderately filled, and contained some splendid birds; a few of the Bramblings were rather wild, but nevertheless in good plumage.

*Class 95* (Greenfinch). Had we been judging this class we would have passed over more than half as being colour-fed monstrosities; in this species, more than in any other, the colour is not only intensified but altered by the process of colour-feeding. The question as to whether the result is an improvement on nature or not is of necessity a matter of opinion; but it seems to us that when one goes to look at a class of British birds, one expects to see the birds as nature coloured them, and not as they are made by man's devices. There is to our mind but a narrow line between "painting" and "colour-feeding." Why cannot the colour-fed birds be judged in a class to themselves? they are separated in Canaries, and it is manifestly unfair that they should not be so in British birds. No. 1836 was the best, and 1839 was also a good bird: the money all went to "impossibilities in nature."

*Class 96* (Yellow-hammer), *Class 97* (A. O. V. Resident



Finch or Bunting), *Class 98* (Skylark). Each of these classes was good of its kind; the Yellowhammers especially were for the most part splendid birds. The A. O. V. was chiefly made up of Reed-buntings, with two exceptions: firstly, a nice Corn-bunting which won a well deserved 2nd; and a Mealy Redpoll, a migratory bird in its wrong class, which was awarded 3rd !

*Class 99* (A. O. V. Lark or Pipit, Resident or Migratory). 1st was a nice Wood Lark in a rather dark cage. 2nd a good Meadow Pipit, 3rd a Shore Lark, 5th a Tree Pipit, the remainder of the class being composed of Meadow Pipits and Wood Larks.

*Class 100* (Robins). A very small class, and, except for those in the money, not of great merit. One could hardly see the 1st prize bird, for the ornamentation of frost and snow, which would have been much better omitted.

*Class 101* (Blackbird), *Class 102* (Thrush), and *Class 103* (Starling). Beyond noticing the fact that these classes were well filled with birds of fine quality, there is nothing to say about them. The Starlings were perhaps rather below the high quality usually seen.

*Class 104* (Magpie, Jackdaw, Jay, Chough) contained many splendid Magpies, a few nice Jays, one or two Jackdaws, among which we noticed 1994, which was not only a good bird but a good talker; one good Chough, which took premier honours; and one indifferent Chough, which, for some obscure reason, was awarded V. H. C. The 2nd and 4th went to Magpies, and the 3rd to a Jay.

*Class 105* (Pied or Albino). As compared with previous years this class was but poorly filled, and with the exception of the remarkable Bullfinch, half-hen half-cock, to which I referred last year, there was nothing worthy of serious notice. A Pied Linnet, Pied Sparrow, Cinnamon Blackbird, Pied Greenfinch, White Blackbird (very inferior compared with Mrs. Herbert's, which has hitherto for many years topped the class), and a Black Bullfinch with light-coloured wings, complete the number.

*Class 106* (A. O. V. Resident Insectivorous, small). A Corn-bunting is rightly disqualified, and next we have a beautiful little Cole Tit. A very nice Lesser Spotted Woodpecker takes 3rd; and next to it a nice Yellow Wagtail, in its wrong class, is disqualified. The 1st prize is taken by Mr. Maxwell's Stonechat, a perfect gem and in beautiful condition. 4th and H. C. are two nice Nuthatches; and a beautiful Grey Wagtail is second.

*Class 107* (A. O. V. Resident Insectivorous, large). This

class begins with three Great Spotted Woodpeckers, very badly judged. No. 2018 (2nd), was very wild and should have been V. H. C. No. 2019 (V. H. C.) a nice bird, might very well have been 4th. No. 2020, the best, should undoubtedly have been 2nd, but perhaps the Judge was beginning to weary, and no wonder. H. C. was a moderately nice Ring Ouzel. 1st and 3rd were two nice Missel Thrushes, the 1st bird being a monster and in *such* condition !

*Class 108* (Blackcap and Nightingale). The best bird in this class was 2024 (2nd), a Blackcap. The 1st prize went to a rather small Nightingale, and the 3rd prize to another Nightingale with the same fault. Three more Blackcaps completed the class.

*Class 109* (A. O. V. Insectivorous, Migratory). Mr. Maxwell takes 1st, 3rd, and 4th, and H. C. in this class with Wryneck, Black Redstart, Yellow Wagtail, and Blue-headed Wagtail respectively, the Black Redstart being a most splendid bird, although they were all good and splendidly kept. The only other species were a Redwing and a Crested Tit, the latter rightly disqualified.

*Class 110* (A. O. V. Seed-eating, Migratory). The 3rd prize was given to a Tree Sparrow, which ought to have been wrong classed; an Ortolan takes 2nd; a Lapland Bunting, a beautiful specimen but wild, 4th; and a nice Snow Bunting takes the honours.

---

## BREEDING GOULDIAN FINCHES.

By W. C. DOUGLAS.

A short account of my experience in breeding these pretty little birds may be of interest to some of the members of the Society.

Two years ago I purchased some Gouldians of both varieties, Blackheads and Redheads, and now have about twenty-five including four young birds.

I keep them in a room 14ft. long by 8ft. wide by 11ft. high, in the centre of which I have erected a small sycamore tree; and at the end facing the light I have hung some cocoa-nut husks and a breeding cage; and an ordinary dome cage stands on a table.

Many times my hopes of breeding these birds have been raised by the making of nests and the laying of eggs, and sitting by the various pairs of birds; but when the Autumn

of last year was well in, and I had given up any idea of the Gouldians nesting in earnest, they set to work, and on the 25th October, I had the good fortune to hear the chirp of young voices in a nest made in the breeding cage, the doors of which I had fastened open.

Although I was very curious to know how many young birds there were in the nest, I curbed my curiosity till 17th November, when, on going to look into the nest, three young Gouldians flew out fully fledged, leaving two unfertile eggs in the nest.

They were a sort of a dull grey without anything to indicate sex or colour of the head, but they had purple spots round the edge of the mouth, and the under part was a lighter colour than elsewhere. Their mother was a Blackhead and their father was a Redhead, both excellent parents, devoting all their time to the feeding of their offspring, who got stronger and more noisy day by day.

All three youngsters got on well with the exception of one little chap who died on 16th December of fits, which seemed to develop suddenly, but from what cause I do not know. On 27th November, another nest attracted my attention; this time it was in a cocoa-nut husk, and, after leaving it undisturbed for about eighteen days, I found two young birds in it half fledged; but the parents in this case were not so good at feeding their progeny, and so the latter did not make nearly so much noise at feeding time, and were in fact, more backward than the first hatching.

The diet I provided for the new comers was hard boiled egg, bread and milk, Abrahams' food, and canary seed and spray millet.

There is also always plenty of sea sand, red sand, crushed oyster shell, mortar from old bricks, chalk straight from the pits, and cuttle shell, and also lump sugar kept damp with water so as to be more easily broken up by the birds.

By the kind advice of Mr. Wiener, I caused the gas jet in the bird room (but outside the wire partition) to be lighted at dusk when the short winter days set in; and, by erecting a sort of reflector of tin so as to throw the light on the feeding shelf, I was glad to find the birds often feeding up to 8 or 9 o'clock at night, at which time the light was turned down; and on foggy mornings the gas is turned on again, and sometimes, alas for London cage birds, kept on the whole day, to enable them to see to feed.

The temperature I keep up to between 50 and 60 degrees Fahr. by means of an oil lamp stove, which is easily turned on and off; and, however cold it is outside, I always open the windows for a few minutes in the mornings to change the air.

The losses by egg-binding of numbers of hen birds is distressing, but I have saved a great many lives by administering weak whiskey and water, and putting the sufferer in a small cage in front of the fire, which treatment generally results in the production of a soft egg; and the bird after a few hours is able to fly about in the bird room again.

The preponderance of males is also a detriment in the bird room, and therefore I have removed half-a-dozen gentlemen to another cage, and am in hopes of again rearing some young birds.

I am also indebted to Mr. Wiener for some of the *Setaria glauca*, which the birds devour with avidity, and which I keep as a *bonne bouche* for them on rare occasions until I can obtain a supply, which I should be glad to do from any source.

---

## REVIEW.

"*My Birds in freedom and captivity*," by the Rev. Hubert D. Astley.—J. M. Dent & Co., Aldine House, 29 & 30, Bedford Street, W.C.

We have been favoured with a copy of this charming book, sumptuously got up. Its author, who is, fortunately for himself and his readers, also its illustrator, is a Member of the Council of the Avicultural Society.

The title is a correct one, for Mr. Astley, who evidently loves birds for their interesting characteristics and not merely for their rarity, writes sketchily of many tribes both British and foreign—alike in freedom and captivity—which he has watched, or studied, or kept in garden or aviary. It is impossible to give any list of all the birds which in his fifteen chapters he describes. Among them Hoopoes, Blue Thrushes, Rock Thrushes, Nightingales, the Indian Shâma, the Dhyal bird, and Virginian Nightingales have a place; his account of a pair of the latter, which escaped from his aviary and nested in freedom in the garden is most interesting, probably a unique experience in England. Ring Ousels too, Water Ousels, Wrens and Titmice, Sea and Shore birds, Parrots and Parrakeets are among the miscellaneous species sketched lightly with pen and pencil. Some of the illustrations, reproduced in photogravure, are extraordinarily life-like, far

more so than the generality of bird-portraits taken now-a-days by professional artists. They remind us of some of the best of Barraband's pictures in Levaillant's *Oiseaux d'Afrique*. The Pied Wagtail, the Ring Ousel, Oyster Catchers and the Red-start strike us as being among the happiest pictures. The author is at times somewhat digressive, but the digressions are always apposite, and such as a scholar and travelled man of the world uses as illustration to his subject, and through them interests in the pursuit of his heart classes which would fail to be attracted by chapters on systematic ornithology. Beyond the graphic portraiture of this wide range of feathered genera there is a chapter on the comforts in cage and aviary, which aviculturists may justly be expected to provide for the creatures which they confine for their pleasure; and a somewhat sad chapter on the cruelties which among some nations are daily practiced on birds from absolute callousness; and in our own land, we hope and think, rather from ignorance of the wants of birds, than from indifference to their sufferings.

We heartily commend the book to all bird-lovers and aviculturists, and are sanguine that it will bring recruits to our ranks. We may add that there is an *édition de luxe* of this work, a copy of which has been graciously accepted from the author by Her Majesty Queen Alexandra.

---

## NOTE.

It is found that no articles are more popular than those in which the Aviaries of Members are described. It has been suggested that the reproduction of Photographs of such Aviaries would be an additional attraction, and I shall be grateful to Members who will send me both descriptions and pictures of their aviaries.

O. E. CRESSWELL, *Editor*.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

---

### AMHERST'S PHEASANTS; WOODLARKS.

SIR,—I have two young Amherst's Pheasants, five-and-a-half months old, and they are exactly like their mother. Can the sexes be distinguished at that age, and how? And when do cocks come into adult plumage? also to what age do aviary Pheasants attain?

Also please let me know how to tell the sex of Woodlarks, and what to feed them on. Are they satisfactory birds in captivity, and do they sing best in a cage or aviary?

GAVIN ALSTON.

*The following replies were sent to Mr. Alston.*

*Re Amherst's Pheasants*—At five-and-a-half months the sexes of young Amherst's Pheasants should be distinguishable. The upper long tail feathers become pencilled with white, while the young hens remain the same colour as their mothers. The next change is the appearance of black about the heads of the young. Unless yours are very backward birds they must be hens. Cocks come into full plumage when about sixteen months old.

O. E. CRESSWELL.

*Re Woodlarks*—The sexes are practically alike, but the female is slightly smaller and has slightly less crest. They should be fed chiefly on soft food and hard-boiled egg, ants' eggs, and a little scraped meat and mealworms. You might try them with a little seed as well, but I do not think they will take much. They are nice birds in a cage, and sing very sweetly and softly, but are rather delicate and will not stand our winters out of doors. In an aviary they are quite harmless to other inmates, but being quiet and dull-coloured are not much seen.

J. L. BONHOTE.

#### NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS.

SIR,—I should be pleased to receive a little information on the following.

A friend, who is leaving N. Orleans for England in a few weeks, has written asking me if I would like a couple of pairs of American Goldfinches (I think I have read they are Siskins); a pair of Baltimore Orioles; and a pair of Orchard Orioles. I have never had these birds, but have read of them; are they of any value? I never remember seeing the Goldfinch for sale; are they rare? (d) Also has the Cat-bird been imported, and is there any sale for them? They are certainly not common in N. York State or Pennsylvania from what I have seen.

I have just received a bird from the Azores, about the size of a Mountain Linnnet but the shape of a Norwich Canary; wings and back yellowish-green striped with dark grey, under parts light greenish-yellow, cheeks grey. Will it be a Wild Canary? It is a very good singer: Canary notes but much sweeter.

H. C. HESLTON.

*The following reply was sent to Mr. Heslton.*

All the birds you mention would be worth having. Why it is I do not know, but these N. American birds seem to be so rarely imported that I have never seen any, excepting the Baltimore Hang-nest, in a bird-shop: they do come occasionally.

Dr. Russ speaks of the American Cat-bird as a favourite cage-bird: he says that it is a good mimic, and is admired and interesting on account of its cat-calls and other amusing notes.

I am afraid I do not recognise the bird from the Azores; and, being at home just now, have no opportunity of looking it up. My advice is—By all means have the American birds.

A. G. BUTLER.

---

(d). See "Avicultural Magazine," Vol. V., page 125, for coloured illustration of this species.—D. S.-S.

## IDENTIFICATION OF BIRD.

SIR,—On passing a bird-shop in Glasgow, a short time ago, a bird in the window drew my attention. It was about the size of a Linnet, and resembled a Siskin in colour and marking, but neither of them was so decided as in that bird. The cap was not so black, the colour of the body was more smoky, and a distinct fawn-coloured bar crossed the wing. I entered the shop with the intention of purchasing it, but was informed by the dealer that it was not for sale. He explained that it had been deposited by a young man who had brought two of them from Cuba, but the other one had died. He said they were Cuba Linnets.

I neglected to ask if he considered it a cock or if it had any song. It was very tame, and although not very bright in colouring still a desirable bird.

As I had not seen a similar bird before, can any of our members give any information about it? also say if this is its proper name.

GAVIN ALSTON.

---

CUBAN LINNET.—(*Reply to Mr. Alston*).

If the bird resembles our Siskin it should belong to the genus *Chrysomitris* which certainly is prevalent in the New World; but I cannot discover that any of the species is known to inhabit Cuba; nor can I find any Siskin with a fawn-coloured band on the wing: indeed I am unable to discover any American finch which fits your description. A coloured sketch of the bird might help me to name it for you. Could it be *Spiza americana*? (e).

A. G. BUTLER.

---

EAGLE OWLS.

SIR,—I have had now two Eagle Owls for five years in a large aviary. They have never shown any signs of wishing to nest, and it is impossible to tell one from the other, so I think they must be of the same sex.

I shall be glad if you can tell me if there is any way of distinguishing the sexes other than by the size, and how long they usually are before breeding.

HENRY BOUGHTON LEIGH.

---

*The following reply was sent to Mr. Leigh:*

I know of no way by which to distinguish the sexes of Eagle Owls except by size, the female being much the larger.

A pair in my possession were taken from the nest in 1896, and made no attempt at breeding until last year, when eggs were laid, but they were unfertile. They are at present busy preparing to nest, and I am hoping for eggs in a short time.

When nesting they become very pugnacious, and attack anyone entering their aviary. The signs of nesting are a great deal of hooting at night, and scrapes made in various parts of their aviary.

J. L. BONHOTE.

---

(e) "The American Bunting" is said to have a chestnut belt across the lesser and median coverts; but it is six inches in length: more than half-an-inch longer than a Linnet.—A. G. B.





Avic. Mag. Pl. I.



Mintern Bros lith.

BOUQUET'S AMAZON  
*Chrysotis bouqueti*.

*Hoodchild.*

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**  
BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 6.

*All rights reserved.*

APRIL, 1901.

---

**“CHRYSHOTIS BOUQUETI.”**

By the Hon. and Rev. CANON DUTTON.

The subject of the accompanying plate had not much to recommend it as a cage bird, except its rarity. It came into my possession almost accidentally.

It is always my custom, when anyone comes from a parrot country to preach for Foreign Missions, to ask them about the parrots of their country. Two or three years ago, in 1897, it happened that Mr. Berkeley, from Barbados, came to preach. I asked him about Guilding's Amazon, which is peculiar to St. Vincent. He told me that if I wrote to Canon Branch, who is a naturalist, he might get me one.

The result of my correspondence was that one was got, by a shot, I think, which brought it down without maiming it. But just as Canon Branch was looking out a ship by which to send it, the bird escaped, and soon after, Canon Branch left St. Vincent for Dominica, and my chance of getting a Guilding's seemed to be gone. I say “seemed” because, as a matter of fact, Lady Thompson, whose very interesting letters to her father, Mr. Bosworth Smith, of Harrow, on the hurricane at St. Vincent, were published in the “Times,” offered me one later. But I pointed out to Canon Branch that if he could no longer get me *Chrysotis guildingii*, yet there was a still rarer bird peculiar to Dominica, *Chrysotis augusta*, and I should be glad to buy a specimen, if one was for sale.

I confess I expected to hear no more, and so was agreeably surprised one day at receiving a letter from him to say his son had shot an *augusta* without injuring it, and he would sell it to me if I would like to have it. I struck the bargain, and then Canon Branch asked me if I would also take a smaller parrot they had. I knew *bouqueti* was also peculiar to Dominica, and asked for the description of the bird, and as the description seemed to be that of *bouqueti*, I agreed to take that too.

In June, last year, I had a telegram from Plymouth to say the steamer with two parrots for me would be at Southampton that night. I packed up, and started at once, but was rather dismayed, on boarding the ship, at the huge size of the cage. However, there was *augusta*, and there, no less certainly, *bouqueti*: though *bouqueti* did not look very cheerful. However, by the aid of two men, the cage was safely landed, and taken to the S. W. Hotel. There it had to stay in the hall all night, for the ship had berthed too late for me to catch the last train home. Early next morning I left, having ordered a special cart to meet my cage at Cirencester, and got home without mishap.

It seemed rather a formidable task to get them out of their cage. *Augusta* is the biggest of all Amazons, and, if it were vicious, it would not be a very easy task to abstract it. The cage was too big to get into the house; however, I had the door broken off in the coach house, and then made a dash for their legs. They did not seem to be vicious, and, with a few squalls and a little fluttering, were soon safe in the cage in which they were to live.

*Augusta* was in fine plumage, and never gave me a moment's anxiety. But I cannot say the same for *bouqueti*. It never *sat* in a right attitude, and always seemed dull. Although it was June, I kept a fire going all day in the small room in which they were; but I confess I left in July for my "kur" at Tarasp, with some misgiving. But I had good accounts of the bird, and when I returned home it seemed fairly well. Later, in the autumn, it again looked out of sorts, and rapidly became so ill that it could no longer sit on the perch and would not eat. I gave up all hope of its recovery; but by one of those chances which happen once in a thousand times, the bird did *not* die, and after one or two relapses got well enough for me to sell it to the Zoological Gardens. In fact it got better than it had ever been.

The bird struck me as being the Dominican variety of the Blue-fronted. It was of the same size; had the same shape, carriage, and tail; while the colouring does not differ more than might be easily accounted for by its complete isolation for centuries. My bird was tame enough to let me scratch its head, but beyond that had nothing to recommend it. It was not affectionate, it never said a word, and uttered ceaselessly a cry, which, although unlike that of any other Amazon, was not the less wearisome on that account. I parted with it without a shadow of regret, and felt its proper place was the Zoo, where it

seems much happier than it was with me. It is the only Amazon that I have seen that *wanted extra* warmth, and I fancy the heat of the Zoo parrot house, which ordinarily I consider too great, just suits it. The authorities there were very glad to acquire it, as it was the first they have had. They have had *versicolor* from S. Lucia, and have one now which I as certainly ought to have, as they *bouqueti*, for the poor thing has evidently been a great pet and misses the petting. Their possessing the two enables the public to compare them.

I am now hoping that Sir Harry Thompson may be able to get me a *versicolor*.

---

## OWLS.

By E. G. B. MEADE-WALDO.

Ever since I kept birds, which is since I was a small child, the Owl family have held the first place in my affections; both as inmates of our aviaries and living in wild and semi-wild conditions about our grounds and woods.

Owls stand confinement well, living for great numbers of years in perfect health. Many species breed well; they maintain themselves in perfect plumage, become very tame, shew themselves well, and, beyond good habitations suited to their mode of life, good and fresh food administered in proper quantities according to the time of year, water for bathing, and of course cleanliness, they do not require much attention. Almost all species appear to be practically indifferent to cold. Aviaries intended for Owls should be roomy and of two compartments, an open and an inner, with solid roof, sides and back; but the entrance into the back compartment may be wide so that birds roosting in it are not out of sight. All Owls love a sun bath, and the site chosen for their aviaries should, if possible, be one that has the morning sun, for half the pleasure in keeping these birds will be lost if you cannot see them enjoying themselves in their own way. And no more curious sight can present itself to the lover of birds than a Great Lapp or Ural Owl laying spread out in the sun bath, its face turned full on the orb itself, the pupils of its eyes vanished to the size of a pin's head. I have seen our own Tawny Owl bask in this manner in its wild state.

All Owls are great bathers and should be supplied with roomy baths, from which, of course, they also drink. This

necessity is, I fancy, often omitted by those who wish to keep Owls. On emerging from their bath some of the large and very downy-plumaged Owls present the most ludicrous appearance.

All the Owls like large and rough perches. I use larch or small Scotch fir poles for mine, but some of the small Owls, such as the Scops, should be supplied with thin perches as well. It is, of course, not advisable to place more than one species of Owl in an aviary, and a breeding pair must always have an aviary to itself.

To keep these birds in perfect health and order good and *fresh* food must be given. For convenience I generally use rabbits, but they also eat birds, chickens' heads and necks; and, when procurable, fur or feathers must always go with each meal; and the health of the individual can always be gauged by the condition of its castings, viz., the indigestible portion of its last meal which is ejected the following day. The healthy castings should consist of the fur or feathers and bones *alone* tightly wrapped. If sloppy, or with portions of undigested meat, the bird is not well. The lining of the gizzard and the skin of the feet of a bird eaten are ejected as indigestible by an Owl when in health, and need not alarm its owner. Owls do not eat the intestines of their prey, and for cleanliness sake it is well to paunch all rabbits etc., that are supplied as food. All Owls eat a great deal more food during the summer and early autumn months than during the rest of the year, and from May to September should have as much as they can eat once a day, but not more. The reason for this feeding is obvious. During the summer and autumn, food is easily obtained, owing to numerous young and inexperienced creatures always being on the move; but when the strain of moulting is over and the supply of fat laid on (all Owls are very fat in winter) much less food is required; and Owls, during the winter and early spring, must often starve for a long time; and most of the larger Owls are none the worse for one day's fast in the week from October to April.

In feeding Owls it may be taken as a rule that the large Owls eat much less food in proportion to their size than small ones. The Scops Owls, who will only exist on exceedingly digestible food and insects, are enormous eaters, and generally require feeding twice a day. The Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) is also an enormous eater, but not in any way a delicate bird. It has been established as a wild species in my neighbourhood for years, and is quite common, and I have seen individuals sitting perched on the telegraph wires when going by train in the middle of a hot midsummer day.

This sketch of Owl keeping is only intended as a hint to their management, and not in any way individual. It may be taken as a general rule that Owls of the genus *Bubo*, as the Eagle Owl is, are very hardy and thrive well, and that the Arctic Owls are delicate and require care, notably Tengmalm's, the Hawk Owl, the Snowy Owl, and of this latter I can endorse all that Mr. St. Quintin says of the importance of tender food for them. Rabbits always as young as possible, young rats (*never* old ones), water rats (the latter are particularly good food, and possibly from being vegetarians are very like the Lemmings) with, if they will eat them, young birds, mice, sparrows, fish, fresh chickens' heads and necks forming the best diet. All food should be given warm, viz., just dead, as often as possible to all the Owl tribe, and has a most beneficial effect.

In describing the aviaries that I consider suitable I forgot to mention that, as many Owls prefer to nest on the ground, it is advisable to have the floor of the back compartment consisting of the ground itself, which is the only thing in which a convenient hole can be scratched. For those that nest in boxes a little decayed wood is all that is necessary, no Owl using any materials for its nest.

At some future time I will give an account of some particular Owls and their nesting habits.

---

## INTELLIGENT PETS.

By ROSIE ALDERSON.

I suppose all bird-lovers have at different times had one special pet which had a nearer place in their affections than any of the others, and this not because of the bird's rarity or beauty, but because it was intelligent and returned the care and love spent upon it by its owner.

One of my earliest recollections was that of "Joe," a very fine Grey parrot. Most people know that a Grey which shows more or less red on the body or wing-feathers, is called by the dealers a "king" bird, and is considered of higher value than an ordinary Grey. Every year as "Joe" moulted his little regal badge always reappeared. He lived with us many years, notwithstanding the fact that his diet was most unsuitable, being chiefly sopped bread and hemp seed. I have never known a bird speak so plainly, or learn fresh words so quickly, and he would not only pronounce the words, but even imitate exactly the tones of the speaker's

voice. The longest of his many sentences was, "The Queen, Prince Albert, and all the Royal Family, hip! hip! hurrah!"\* "Joe" had a keen sense of humour, and would whistle for the dog, and then if the animal obediently answered his call, would command him in scathing tones to "get out." At times "Joe" would put on a pathetic air, and bid "Anne, fetch the doctor, poor Joe's very poorly." He was a born actor, and could dance very prettily, lifting his feet most daintily, and whistling softly meanwhile. Then too, when told to 'put his coat on,' he would imitate in a most amusing fashion the struggles of a man getting into a great coat. He would make any number of courtly bows when bidden, and like the celebrated "Grip," could uncork and decanter innumerable bottles of imaginary wine.

Another of my special favourites was "Ben," a tufted duck. In his summer suit of white and glossy purple-black he looked very fine, with his quaint little "duck tails" depending from the back of his head, which he used to shake in the most old fashioned manner.

His wife "Susan," and a little Teal named "Oliver," were his most devoted slaves. The trio spent most of the day basking under some bushes near the house, but in the evening they regularly journeyed down to a small artificial stream, some way down the garden. "Ben" always led the van, and called for frequent halts, squatting on the grass, whilst the other two would patiently wait beside him until he was ready to proceed, never dreaming of going on alone.

"Ben" had a great weakness for freshly dug up worms, and I had only to come into the garden with a small fork or trowel in my hand to fill him with the greatest excitement. He would follow me all over, and when overcome by his importunity, I tried to find some of the coveted dainties, he would stand close to me with his eyes fixed on the hole I was digging, and if the worms did not appear fast enough—as sometimes happened in hot weather—he would tug at my dress with his bill, and then run away frightened for the moment at his own boldness, only to return presently with renewed courage. "Ben" would feed from our hands, but much preferred to wash his worms before eating them, and would solemnly lead the way, with a worm dangling in his bill, to a bowl of water (that always stood in the

---

\* Probably "Joe" learnt this sentence previous to Prince Albert's death in 1861. This being so the parrot must have been *at least* 23 years old when he died, which was about 1883, but I only remember him for the latter part of his life.—R. A.

garden) looking back at me, and telling me as plainly as possible to bring the remaining worms, and look quick about it.

It is now some years ago since I went to my first bird show. It was held at the Royal Aquarium, and who can describe the delights, to the novice in bird keeping, of a first show. Here I saw for the first time in my life a pair of Cordon Bleus. There seemed only one pair exhibited, from which fact, in our ignorance, we concluded they were very rare as well as lovely, and it ended in our buying them for a very high figure.

Next day we were disillusioned.

In a dealer's shop were some of these very birds, at a few shillings a pair, and in talking of the show to the shopman he remarked, 'he had heard of a party there, who had given over £2 os. od. for a pair of Cordons.' It was the last straw to our discomfiture.

All the same these little birds gave us much pleasure. I think they would have bred in an aviary, for the hen laid several eggs in the large cage which they tenanted together with numerous small Waxbills.

Poor "Phyllis" died after a time, and "Corydon," who had never shown her much affection, became devoted to a second wife; she also died, and a third hen was provided. At first the newcomer was terribly persecuted by the cock, but she was a very wise little bird, and evidently took for her own the motto of *Prosper le Gai*, "I bide my time," and in the end succeeded in entirely winning the affection of her lord and master.

The Cordons' cage stood in a large bay window, and as "Corydon" grew old it was found too cold for him, so he was placed in a separate cage by the fire, but at night he cried so plaintively, that we put him back, when the birds were moved for the night into a warmer room. The little fellow knew quite well it was for his good, and would hop quite readily of his own accord into his private cage, and as readily return to the hen at roosting time, always letting us know when he considered it was the proper hour by chirping loudly.

All these pets are dead and gone, but one which is a great favourite is still living. I have had my little Senegal Parrot for nearly a year.

He had already been four years in England when I bought him, and was sold to me under a wrong name, the modest price asked being only 7/-. His colouring is very pretty. He has a grey head, bright orange yellow breast, and the rest of his body



chiefly grass green. At first he was so nervous that it was painful to come near him, for if I only spoke he trembled all over. *Now* he demands the first attention of any bird in the aviary, and is inclined to be jealous of a beautiful Masked Parrakeet, "Dick Turpin," which is very tame and somewhat of a rival.

My Senegal loves to be let out of his cage, but is terribly destructive to the woodwork, and is fast pulling the aviary to pieces. He quite despises the special log put for his delectation, and if I reprove him looks up for a moment as if to say, "don't interrupt, I'm very busy," and continues to strew the floor most industriously with splinters. He is a very gentle and affectionate bird, and has quaint little ways of his own. While on my arm he will rarely eat with his face towards me, always turning his back, and then reversing himself when he has finished his dainty. Having only just learnt to come on my hand he is rather nervous over it, and evidently decides in his own mind that if he can't see me, why then, of course, I can't see him.

Though perfectly well now, a short time ago I feared my Senegal was going to die. He slept nearly all day, and seemed very ill. On the kind advice of two of our members I varied his seed diet, and put two or three drops of Tabasco Sauce daily in his water. Also, as he seemed very lonely, and I could not find him a hen, I fastened a looking-glass in his cage—with great success. He was very delighted with it, and possibly agrees better with his own reflection than he might do with a living companion.

All my parrots prefer a make of biscuit called "Nice" to any other, and both the Senegal and the Masked Parrakeet delight in peanuts. The latter is also very fond of mealworms and spray millet. In conclusion, I may just mention that I have found Tabasco Sauce a splendid remedy for chill and inflammation in the cases of a Diuca Finch and an Avadavat, both of which seemed at death's door.

---

## "OUR JOEY."

By Mrs. BARKLEY.

We have had our Cockatiel for some years, but he was not until lately a very special favourite, for though tame and fearless, he has not been affectionate. If a finger were put between the bars of his cage, even though accompanied by endearing epithets, he would instantly attack it, drawing blood with his sharp little beak. When let out he would fly on to the

breakfast table, stalk about as if all belonged to him, eat a little salt, nibble a hole in the loaf and toss a spoon or two on the ground then fly on to my shoulder, but every time I moved my head he would give my ear a horrible tweak. All his real affection was centred in a Grey parrot, their cages had always to be side by side; were Polly carried out of the room, Joey's cage must quickly follow or he rent the air with ear piercing screams, and however far off Polly might be, she heard and answered back; but yet Polly did not fully return his love for if Joey alighted on her cage she would at once try to bite him, and we could never let the two out together. But ye: Polly would sit with her wings opened out like Joey's, and would imitate his wee voice so exactly one could not tell which was speaking. "Joey, Joey, Joey, pretty Joey, pretty dear, kiss pretty dear, pity poor Joey, let poor Joey out, kiss kiss kiss," first one and then the other would say, and then try to whistle a tune, Polly copying all Joey's blunders.

But one day our dear Polly died—sadly mourned by us all. Joey sat by her till the last, but he seemed to understand it all, for when she was carried away dead he never called after her but sat silent and moping for a day or two. We put him beside the Budgerigars, but he thought them too small to be interesting and instead cast loving eyes on the Fox terrier. If Tinker were lying in the arm chair, Joey would sit on the arm of it, posturing and talking and kissing, and when the dog jumped down Joey would follow and keep running to and fro under his nose. It amused Tinker and he would sometimes wish to have a rough game, in which we feared he might unintentionally hurt poor Joey; and when the bird would try sometimes to alight on his back he would get a little nervous and cross, and so at last Joey has been constrained to turn to his human friends. He now sits on my shoulder without punishing my ear so cruelly; and on cold evenings when we draw round the fire he likes to nestle in my lap, wrapped round in a warmed duster, with a fold of my dress drawn over him. If I peep at him I often find his eyes closed and his head lying sideways as if on a pillow; now and then he pops his head out and looks around and then draws it back like a tortoise into its shell. He will also at these times let me scratch his head and coax him without attempting to bite. I rather fear that love of warmth may be a sign of old age, and now we have grown fond of each other I shall grieve when the time comes to part with him.

## ODDS AND ENDS.

By REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

**ACCIDENTS.**—In reply to Miss Alderson's inquiry (p. 82), I think it essential that support of some kind should be used in the case of a broken leg. The point to be aimed at is that, after the two ends of the broken bone have been placed in position, they should be so fixed that there may not be any movement to hinder the knitting of the two pieces. The actual kind of splint or support used must depend on the position of the fracture and the size of the bird, for it must not be too heavy for the patient to bear. In the case of the Cuckoo I spoke of (p. 56), the fracture being actually at the joint, nothing was used or seemed possible but a simple linen figure-of-8 bandage, which I had been taught in olden days at the St. John Ambulance Classes. I think I give good advice (alas! I do not always follow even my own advice) when I add that it is, as a rule, a wise proceeding to call in a doctor or vet., the former from preference, if one can be obtained who will trouble himself about a bird, as some of the latter are very heavy handed. Not only are two pairs of hands necessary, but professional men have materials and appliances (not to mention professional knowledge) which are often of great value, and which an amateur would not possess.

**THE SHAMA.**—I am very glad that Phil. is so well (p. 82). The Shama, in my opinion, is a charming species.

**ROCK SALT.**—I can fully endorse Mr. St. Quintin's appreciation (p. 82) of the value of rock salt. I keep it in all my aviaries and cages, and have done so for many years. Mr. Savage had something to say on this subject, likewise in connection with Gouldian Finches, at page 17 of Vol. III., where also I have a foot-note. As Mr. St. Quintin infers, in dry places it requires wetting pretty frequently. Pieces in cages I regularly dip or even wash.

**EGG SHELLS AND EGG-EATING.**—Another capital thing is a supply of egg shells, from fresh eggs only. These should be baked, and then ground in a coffee mill, or else crumbled very small. This will not induce to egg-eating, as some have supposed. Small aviary birds very rarely, probably never, eat their own eggs for the sake of eating them: they are not such fools as all that. They eat their eggs simply because they consider their surroundings unsuitable for breeding. A regular egg-eater, if moved to a proper place, will breed at once.

A supply of egg shells has just the opposite effect, for it supplies a want which is sometimes keenly felt, and thus not only tends to prevent egg-eating but likewise egg-stealing. Nevertheless remember that tons of egg shells will not force a dissatisfied couple to breed successfully.

**SOFT EGGS.**—It seems to me that some of the treatments suggested for anything of the nature of egg-binding are altogether too drastic. One feels that a bird could not be very far gone if it could go through what is sometimes recommended—and live. So long as certain of the more delicate antipodeans are permitted to nest in cages or small aviaries, or to over-lay, during our winter months more especially, soft eggs will occasionally occur, no matter what care may be taken. But if it be a first case, and cold has not been caught, extra warmth and a quiet retreat are usually all that are necessary. Nevertheless, where plenty of space cannot be provided, segregation of the sexes is the only safe course.

The treatment by Mr. W. C. Douglas (p. 105) of his birds is practically what I have followed for years. I use brandy (sparingly) instead of whiskey, and add fluid magnesia (an invaluable bird-medicine) freely, place in a box-cage with a little short-cut hay in one corner and plenty of perfectly dry sand, &c., and a low perch, and cover well over with green baize excepting a small part opposite the food and drink. The food should be of the simplest, and should include a little plain biscuit crumbled small. I place the cage in a quiet spot near the stove, and, if it be merely a soft egg, the bird will be all right in the morning. As a precautionary measure, I keep it in the box-cage for a few hours before returning it to its old quarters. Should inflammation of the ovary have been set up by cold or other cause, the case is very serious. If warmth and quiet, assisted by some such medicine as the above, will not cure the patient, nothing will. Strong measures cannot but do harm; for it must be remembered that tiny foreign finches should not be judged, as they too often are, by the Canary standard; and even the latter would be all the better if gentler measures were used. As the bird is about to be placed in the cage, a little of the above mixture should be given with a paint brush. In very bad cases, and also when the patient loses heart and settles down to die, the physicking must be continued from time to time, but with the greatest care and gentleness. A drop of sweet oil deposited on the vent will sometimes render valuable aid; but warmth is the great thing—

even to the extent, should it become necessary, of placing the bird in a tiny cage over the kitchen range.

**GREEN FOOD.**—In the aviary, all the year but especially during the winter months, when grass, &c., cannot be relied on to grow freely, I regularly sow wheat as well as grass; and it is greatly appreciated by birds of many species. I refer, of course, to the young growing corn; and equally of course it must be sown very thickly. I find no difficulty (if I can find the time) in keeping up a plentiful supply of green food growing in the aviary all the year round. Here, in London, at no season of the year can the special plants and weeds so often recommended be obtained, but with wheat, oats, grass, peas, &c., and sometimes rape, I find it possible to do very well without them. The Virginia Creeper shoots, too, are largely eaten by some species. In addition to the foregoing, during the autumn and winter, cut-up grapes for the Orioles, Bulbuls, &c., are within the reach of the whole avine community. In the closed cages (winter only), I supply cooked cabbage, or greens of some kind, in little glass dishes (never metal), of which a considerable quantity is regularly consumed by some of the birds, apparently to their no small benefit. Raw green food will sometimes kill birds unaccustomed to it; but I have never known anything but good result from green food that has been cooked.

**LIGHTS AT NIGHT.**—I do not say that lights in winter are in all cases absolutely necessary, but I consider them to be desirable, and in *some* cases quite necessary. It is a common saying that more birds die during the autumn and spring than in the winter. The moult, directly or indirectly, accounts for the autumnal mortality, but how about the (p. 88) spring! Privation does not necessarily kill outright, but it so weakens the constitution that, although the poor victim may struggle on for a while, it nevertheless sinks to so low an ebb that a very little trial, something less than the night frosts of spring, will too often cause it to pass away, sometimes without any very apparent cause. Consider how near to death's door Mr. Wiener's birds (p. 18) must have been when just a trifling delay in their breakfast caused their death! I must give one solemn warning however; it is not sufficient to shine a light on the food dishes; the light must be sufficient to enable the birds to find their ways back to the sleeping-boxes.

While considering this question, it must be borne in mind that birds unaccustomed to artificial light do not understand it

at first; but if it be persevered in and arranged judiciously they will come out in troops during the very long nights. The unanimity with which the majority give up the night feeding as the nights shorten is worthy of notice, for it seems to shew that it is not greed that prompts them to leave their snug quarters but an intuitive impulse of stern necessity.

In the birdroom, in which my birds fly loose, I have found it best to hang up two or three dimly burning hurricane lamps during the winter nights. A good class of lamp, costing three shillings and sixpence in London, is perfectly safe if properly attended to, and will last through the longest night and help the birds to an early breakfast in the morning.

STOVES.—Some of our members are fortunate in being able to have properly constructed aviaries, heated with hot water pipes; but there are many who, like myself, have to make other arrangements for warming the rooms in which their birds are kept during the winter. A coal fire is unsatisfactory, in many cases impracticable; and for many years past I have been trying gas and paraffin stoves of various kinds. The gas has long since been rejected; and, of the oil stoves which I happen to have tried, all have been condemned but Rippengille's. These differ much, and have their faults, but they can be depended on. They *need* never go wrong; it is entirely one's own fault if they do. In my dining room, however, they have not been so successful as in the birdroom. In the former, during the cold season, I regularly keep some of the more delicate or more highly valued of my pets; but, owing to the large bay window and its proximity to the cold draughty entrance hall, this room is very cold; and the ordinary stove has failed to keep up the temperature sufficiently during severe weather. Last autumn, I purchased one of Rippengille's hot air radiating tubular stoves. It is 36in. long  $\times$  30in. high  $\times$  7in. broad, is not unsightly, and can be moved about at will, but should not be placed on the unprotected carpet. Mine has been standing in the window recess, where it cuts off the draught, and has proved moderately satisfactory. With the door open some fifteen hours out of the twenty-four, during the severest weather this winter, the thermometer, on the wall just opposite the door and some distance from the stove, has not gone below 53 deg. Fahr., which is fairly good (*a*). As a rule, of course, the temperature has been

---

(a). This stove was not so satisfactory during the high north-east winds of March, the temperature of the room often falling to 50 deg. After a winter's trial, I have come to the conclusion that it requires more care and attention, and is less reliable, than many of those of the ordinary type.—R.P.

up to and above 60°. It gives remarkably little trouble; and although, in cold weather, it consumes a great deal of paraffin, yet it supplants the coal fire which, with or without the birds would without it be necessary; and even for living purposes the room is distinctly more comfortable than it would be if heated by a fire, as it is always warm and ready, night and day. The fumes from all these stoves are slightly objectionable, notwithstanding that one gets so used to them as not to notice them; and sometimes I feel sorry that I did not obtain a hot water stove instead; but I doubt if a hot water stove of reasonable size would have kept up the temperature so well; and it probably would not have been so convenient in a dining-room.

**NESTING BOXES.**—I am under the impression that inquiries have been made in our pages concerning nesting boxes. Mrs. Rotch, the mother of our valued member Mr. Claude D. Rotch, herself an enthusiastic aviculturist, very kindly gave me the other day a pamphlet published by the Peasant Arts Society, 8, Queen's Road, Bayswater, London, in which an account, with illustrations, of nesting boxes for wild birds may be found, and at which address I understand the nesting boxes may be obtained. Some of these it seems natural to suppose would be equally suitable for birds in captivity. Log-nests for Parrakeets, &c., with saucer-shaped bottoms, so far as I know, can be obtained in this country only from Mr. J. Abrahams (*b*), 192, St. George Street, London, E. See also pp. 39, 128, and 161, of Vol. VI.

**SOFT SOAP.**—I was reminded by a lady the other day of a little, very little, thing which occasionally gives a great deal of trouble. I refer to the red mite. If soft soap, used as bought, be smeared over the chinks and crevices in cages and aviaries, you will not be troubled with vermin of this kind. When cages are stacked one on the top of another, if soft soap be smeared freely where the cages come in contact with one another, they may be left unmoved for a year and more without the slightest fear. No fear need be entertained of the birds touching it; only take care that it be not placed where they may soil their feathers. Care also should be exercised when nesting boxes are being prepared, so as not to repel the birds themselves.

I have used soft soap with satisfactory results for a very different purpose. Some of the small Parrakeets (I should think

---

(*b*) The news of Mr. Abrahams' sudden death must have come as a shock to many besides myself. His death will be a great loss to the avicultural world.—R. P.

twice before I tried it on with an enraged Cockatoo or an angry Macaw) are very spiteful, and will attack and freely bite those who attend to their wants. Thickly smear a finger with the soap, and place it within their reach. If they bite, hold the finger again and again up to their beak, until they flee in abject terror and consternation. I do not know from personal experience, but have an idea that a good mouthful of soft soap is not altogether a pleasing morsel to the taste. But it is only soap, and cannot really hurt either the birds or their plumage.

Again, when a Parrakeet gnaws wood-work which you do not wish to have injured, smear the same with soft soap; and the offender will usually turn his attentions elsewhere. And mice may often be successfully deterred from climbing by a liberal application of the same delicious compound to their customary upward path.

THE SATIN-BIRD.—I am surprised that Mr. Page (p. 69) should give the height of the Satin-bird's bower as 12 inches. In my garden here I have had them repeatedly nearly or fully double that height. Probably it depends on the sticks obtainable, for birds of this species will run off with remarkably long ones when they have the chance. A 2-3 foot poplar rod, or shoot of the year, they will carry off with ease. Every spring, while I was pruning my trees, these birds used to come up behind me—always dead behind me—and steal the loppings of every size, with which they would cautiously sneak off with the most intense glee, more than half of their delight being caused I suspect by the wicked thought in their knavish hearts that I did not see them and that they were diddling me. If not disturbed, they will keep on adding to the same bower, year after year, until it becomes a huge affair.

As regards their moult (p. 7), my Satin-birds, of which I have had three, used to moult regularly every year just the same as any other healthy and moderately hardy bird. The male used to take two annual moults to gain the adult plumage, but each moult was complete in itself and was not in the smallest degree protracted. I quite fail to see why it should be otherwise, for it is not like a Weaver or other bird coming into colour every year at the breeding season, but an ordinary case of a bird moulting into the adult plumage. Dr. Butler's way of putting it, that the change of colour occupies just a year (p. 8), by a kind of octave counting is in a sense correct, but perhaps a little misleading. By one moult it becomes a parti-coloured bird, by the succeeding annual moult it completes the plumage of the adult male. That



is, it takes, or should take, two annual moults, each one complete in itself, to finish off the work (c). Where this does not happen, there must be something wrong with the birds, their aviary, or their food. I found the same to be the case with the male Naked-throated Bell-bird (*Chasmorhynchus nudicollis*). At one annual moult it changed from the greenish plumage of the young bird to a speckled plumage,—whilst bearing which I thought it looked its best—and at the succeeding annual moult it became pure white. To return to the Satin-bird, as Mr. Page infers, the age at which the male commences to don the plumage of the adult is not certainly known. I feel inclined to say that the young male does not put on a single dark feather until it is at the very least three years old.

The Satin-bird is too bulky and boisterous for the birds I now keep, but I can most strongly recommend it to those who have plenty of space to spare. In a large well-sheltered Wilderness, with snug winter quarters attached, it would breed. Even in their unsuitable aviary at the Zoological Gardens, eggs have been dropped about I am told; and last summer they even went so far as to build a nest in a box tree. But it is a Wilderness they require, not a trimly kept parterre like their home at the Zoo. To do well, this species should have a really large place, with abundance of grass and green food growing naturally. It is an active powerful bird and requires much exercise; and, as it will sample every leaf, care must be exercised in the selection of the trees and shrubs planted within its domain.

(To be continued).

---

## REVIEW.

*Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds*, by Archibald James Campbell, Melbourne. (Pawson & Brailsford, Sheffield), imp. 8vo., 1901.

This very important work has at length appeared, and so greatly advances the knowledge of the nidification of the Birds of Australia that it undoubtedly ought to find a place in the library of every scientific aviculturist. The book is a bulky one, inasmuch as it contains (with its indices) no less than 1102 pages

---

(c). My 'way of putting it' was simply stating a fact: the colouring of the body changed so gradually that, if produced by a continuous moult, only one or two small feathers can have been dropped on the same day: at first only two or three black feathers appeared on the whole body, but twelve months later these had increased in number to the extent of a complete change of colour. My birds have been in absolutely perfect health from the beginning. The only moult in the year of large feathers only, which I was aware of (the only one in which feathers remained on the floor of the aviary) was between July and September, 1900: both birds have been in perfect plumage since then.—A. G. B.

of letterpress; in addition to portraits of the late John Gould and the author, a map, 28 coloured plates, and 131 photographic illustrations.

Instead of quoting synonyms, Mr. Campbell has wisely contented himself with a simple reference to the British Museum 'Catalogue of Birds' and one good figure; thus the whole of the text is devoted to practical information; the latter is arranged much as in my "Handbook of British Oology" under the headings of '*Geographical Distribution*,' '*Nest*,' '*Eggs*,' and '*Observations*'; the period of nidification, when known, being noted under the last heading instead of (as in my little book) forming a separate heading. In many cases the observations are most interesting.

The portrait of Gould, taken five years before his death, is admirable, but gives little idea of his appearance when in full vigour; as I first knew him in the sixties. The photographs of nests and nesting sites are, for the most part, very good; those most interesting to the Aviculturist will probably be the nest of the Satin Bower Bird, opposite p. 192; of the White-backed Magpie, facing p. 292; the White-eye or Zosterops, p. 348; the nesting-place of a Pardalote, p. 448; nest of the Masked Wood-Swallow, p. 466; young Laughing Jackasses, p. 552; taking a White Cockatoo's nest, p. 612; Ant hillock, showing nest of the Beautiful Parrakeet, p. 646; egg mound of Megapode, p. 702; nest of the Black Swan, p. 1014; finding an Emu's nest, p. 1058; Emu's nest, p. 1060; but one of the most charming pictures in the book is the 'Home of the Parra (Jacana),' p. 774.

As regards the coloured plates, that of the Rose-breasted Robins and Nest, p. 142, is not a success; and is more suitable for a children's magazine than a scientific work: it is a pity it was included. The coloured illustrations of the eggs are characteristic, but some of them a little flat. One can hardly hope for absolute perfection in any human work, and Mr. Campbell's book is so good generally, that we must not complain if the coloured illustrations do not equal the photographs in excellence.

A. G BUTLER.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

---

SICK CRIMSON-WINGED PARRAKEET; ECLECTUS NESTING.

SIR,—Will you please let me know the proper treatment for the following case.

A cock Crimson Wing was brought in by my man to-day with inflammation in one eye.

The eye seems rather swollen and inflamed, and the bird keeps it shut as much as possible. The other eye seems perfectly right. I have bathed the eye in weak boracic lotion, and am keeping the bird warm.

Would you tell me if I can do anything more, and if the bird is likely to lose the sight of the eye? It has been in a large outdoor aviary all the winter, and is otherwise in perfect health.

Would you also tell me if I can give anything beyond seeds and fruit to a hen *Eclectus*, who is sitting on eggs? Will she require bread and milk if the eggs hatch?

M. JOHNSTONE.

---

*The following reply was sent to Mrs. Johnstone.*

Your Crimson Wing has doubtless taken cold in some form, but it is impossible to say off-hand what the result may be. If the bird has had a thorough chill, which is exceedingly likely, the loss of one or both eyes may follow: nay, more—the bird may linger on and die. But if it be a simple case of a cold in the eye from sitting in a draught, if your treatment *was not delayed*, there is hope that the eye may be saved.

Keep the bird comfortably warm in an even temperature day and night, and be most careful to exclude even a suspicion of a draught. Bathe the affected eye rather frequently with warm water, as warm as the bird can bear without hurt. Twice, or not more frequently than thrice, in the day, add a little lotion to the warm water. I hardly like too much of the boracic lotion. You might try a change, at any rate temporarily, to the simple old-fashioned zinc-and-rose-water. Attend carefully to the general health of the bird, and carefully avoid any stimulating or heating food. A little fluid magnesia in the drinking water now and then might be beneficial, especially if the inflammation continue. Do *not* bathe the other eye so long as it seems to be all right, or it might catch any possible infection.

---

Food for a Parrot with young should, as far as practicable, be simply an enlargement on that to which it has been accustomed. A new food, however valuable, may be avoided because it is strange, or it may be partaken of too freely and temporarily upset the bird's system. You mention fruit as part of the birds' food: give plenty of it. If accustomed to bananas, supply them freely; also grapes if the birds have been having them. I should certainly give a little bread (I prefer biscuit) and milk (or bread moistened with water)—and watch. I always add to my seed Huntley and Palmer's "Tea" biscuits crumbled up; this the birds eat dry and quite naturally, but it quickly softens into pulp in the crop; nevertheless do not give too much. I also cut up, and place on the top of the seed, dry bits of date and fig, I mean, as little sticky as may be. I also give the best sultana raisins, carefully cleaned, and cut in halves. Doubtless you give them maize. If you give oranges, I would not give milk at the same time, as the acidity of the orange might act on the milk.

May I express a hope that you will send an account of this interesting case to the Magazine!

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

---

*Mrs. Johnstone states further:—*

The Crimson Wing at any rate seems no worse; but the hen has also a bad eye; it appears glazed over like a white film. She has also lost the use of one foot: I never saw anything like it before. I noticed she perched

awkwardly about November. It is no worse; but on close examination I see the use of the foot has gone. The other foot is all right, but this one seems quite stiff and helpless. They always roosted in a mass of logs and bracken but I fear this very severe weather has been more than they can stand.

The Red-sided Eclectus, my man now tells me, has only one egg as far as he can see; it is difficult to judge as she is nesting in a long log-nest. She laid once previously *one* egg, but it proved clear. She sits very closely, and only comes off to take a few seeds, and, if she hear a sound, darts back to the nest. The cock never feeds her as far as I can see. Should the egg hatch, I will certainly write again.

M. JOHNSTONE.

---

*The following further reply was forwarded to Mrs. Johnstone.*

I fear much that nothing can be done for your female Crimson Wing but to give gentle warmth and nursing, simple food, and fluid magnesia occasionally in the drinking water. I would not worry this bird by bathing the eye if there be no apparent inflammation; from what you say, it is too late. The mischief has been done. It is possible, but exceedingly unlikely, that these two birds may have pricked their eyes in the aviary. Dead gorse might do this; but you mention only the innocent bracken. It seems to me that your birds were in too good health and condition (notwithstanding the foot) to be killed outright by the cold, but that it has most seriously affected their system. If they recover, with the loss of only one eye each, it is the best that may be hoped for I fear.

If the female *has not received any injury*, the loss of the use of one foot probably will have been caused by difficulty of some sort in connection with egg-production,—probably set up by cold. The desire of these antipodeans to nest during our cold season is a source of great danger and difficulty. It seems now too late to do anything. Gentle warmth and quiet, simple diet, and a well-shaded corner into which she can retreat from all glare and disturbance, hold out the only possible hopes.

I am very much interested in what you say about the Eclectus. Tell your man not to disturb her in any way, but (apparently) to ignore her existence as far as possible. I cannot call to mind any instance of an Eclectus having laid in this country.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

---

#### GOULDIAN FINCHES.

SIR,—Mr. Wiener invites the experiences of those who have kept Gouldian Finches, and, although I believe I have recorded mine on more than one occasion, for the benefit of those who may not have seen it, I do so again.

With me the Gouldian Finches have always been the simplest and hardest of tropical birds to keep: living for years, breeding most freely, and always appearing in perfect health and condition. The management is so simple that it practically amounts to none at all. They are placed in pairs in the open aviary at the end of April or in the beginning of May, one pair in a compartment. I do not find that more than one pair nest satisfactorily in a compartment, however large it may be; but this I think is not the experience of some.

They moult out in the spring and early summer, slowly at first, very quickly afterwards, commence nesting in August, and rear two broods of young ones between then and October. In numbers from three to six.

practically all eggs are hatched and all young reared. In November I catch them up, and place each family with its parents in roomy open wire cages, called, I believe, waggon-shaped; these are stood on tables in a window of an ordinary living room, and, beyond being kept free from any draught, have no particular attention. Abundance of coarse sharp sand, plenty of baked and crushed egg shell, a lump of rock salt (which is moistened every morning) in each cage, plants of *Poa annua* pulled from any neglected path or road side, seeding chickweed when procurable—is all that is necessary, beside the ordinary canary seed, spray millet, and white millet. Although I see that the old birds are very fond of eating young shooting grass from the lawns in their aviaries, I do not detect that they feed the young on anything but hard seed.

My birds have never wished to nest again after they were brought in from their outdoor aviaries, and have never wished to rear more than two broods. The young remain long in the nest, and do not leave until practically full grown and strong on the wing.

When in the open aviary they of course have access to the rock salt and egg shell that is supplied to all other birds.

E. G. B. MEADE-WALDO.

#### THE WHITE-BREASTED MANNIKIN.

SIR,—I bought a pair of birds from a well-known importer a few days ago, which he called Pectoralis Finches. I cannot find any description tallying with these finches in any book I possess, and will be obliged if you can aid me in any way.

The following is a description of the cock: Size nearly equal to the Ribbon Finch; top of head and front of face black, a narrow band round this, golden brown; back and wings pale brown with minute white spots; a patch on breast (like the violet patch on a Gouldian Finch, but shallower) a mixture of brown and white feathers; under parts brown, becoming paler towards and shading into white at the vent; tail dark brown; bill slate-coloured; legs and feet pink-brown shade. The hen is not so clearly marked. They seem to thrive on canary and millet.

I enclose a rough drawing, shewing the distribution of colours.

JOHN FOULIS.

*The following reply was sent to Mr. Foulis:*

The bird you describe is the Pectoral Finch or White-breasted Mannikin (*Munia pectoralis*) from North-West Australia.

Until quite recently it was very rarely imported indeed. I remember seeing one at a bird show at Brighton in 1896, and I think this must have been almost if not quite the first living specimen seen in this country. During the last year or two, however, quite a number have arrived, and it cannot now be considered rare.

I have had about half-a-dozen specimens in my aviary for about a year, and have found them quite hardy but shy and uninteresting. They have made no attempt at nest-building to my knowledge, although I once witnessed a most comical love dance; the female standing still on the ground facing her mate, who, with lowered head and expanded tail, hopped from side to side with great rapidity.

Canary and millet seed are about all they require. D. SETH-SMITH.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**  
BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 7.

*All rights reserved.*

MAY, 1901.

---

## SOME OUT-OF-THE-WAY DUCKS.

By FRANK FINN, F.Z.S.

I have already treated of the best-known species of the Duck family in my series on Fancy Waterfowl in the "Feathered World" of last year—which, by the way, is now available in book form—and as Mr. Seth-Smith has complained in a recent number of our Magazine of the paucity of articles on these birds, I am emboldened to offer a few remarks on some species which are very little known as yet, but of which I have been fortunate in having personal experience. Of these the most generally attractive and deserving of importation is

### THE COTTON TEAL (*Nettion coromandelianus*).

This most charming little creature is often known as the Pigmy Goose or Goose-Teal, but wrongly so, as neither in its plumage or in its habits does it display any affinity to the true Geese; and, although its bill is strikingly like that of a Goose in miniature, its general build is very different, the neck, wings, and legs being short, and the tail long and rounded. It is almost the smallest of all ducks, being less than an ordinary Pigeon, but it is nevertheless remarkably showy. That is to say, the drake is, his plumage being mostly white, with wings of a dark metallic green marked with a big white patch on the flights; a black cap, necklace and tail, and flanks delicately pencilled with fine black lines. His bill is black, feet olive-yellow with black webs, and eyes ruby red. The duck is dark brown where the drake is black or green, and has no black necklace or white wing-patch; her flanks are plain drab, and her neck is pencilled with brown. There is also a dark brown streak passing along the side of the head through the eye, which gives her a particularly pretty and innocent expression. Her bill is yellowish brown, and her feet duller than the drake's, while her eyes are brown also. Young birds resemble her, and so does

the drake when in his undress plumage, a garb which he puts on in winter, not in summer like other drakes which undergo this change. He may, however, always be distinguished by the green and white of the wings, which do not change.

The Cotton-Teal, as it is called by Anglo-Indians, is almost the commonest duck in India, and is not migratory. It is not considered a very good table bird, but hundreds are, nevertheless, brought into the market at Calcutta for sale as food during the wild-fowl-netting season in our "cold weather" here. It has, however, very rarely been sent to Europe, as it is by no means an easy bird to keep in close confinement, although when let loose on a pond or in a large aviary with plenty of water, it thrives very well and becomes remarkably tame—not to say cheeky, for it does not appear to have much respect for larger ducks, and I have seen one show a bold front to an obtrusive crow. It is a most active little bird, a fast swimmer and a very good diver, and very agile on the wing. On land, however, it is at a great disadvantage, being naturally weak in the legs and hence readily disabled. Although not by any means unable to walk, as stated by some writers, it does not like to go more than a few feet at a time, and is very apt to collapse when it tries to turn round or go fast! It seems also never to stand on one leg like other ducks. Yet its feet are strong enough for some purposes, as it perches readily, being naturally a builder in trees, and will cling or climb up wire-netting in a manner remarkable in a duck. Herein lies the difficulty of keeping it in any ordinary cage; it *will* climb up the sides, to fall ruinously down again; and if debarred from clambering will jump and flutter foolishly.

Hence, when I sent some to the London Zoo four years ago, I had to devise some means for keeping them penned up and yet uninjured. This I managed by confining them in a metal tank about four feet by three, with a movable wire-netting cover. Into this was put daily a few inches of water, the foul water of the day before being let off by a plug, while a flat cage or a plank supported on two bricks set on edge served as a resting-platform for the dozen birds I kept confined. Of course at flighting-time at nightfall they waddled along the platform and sprang up, but, falling back into the water, did not hurt themselves, and so "survived successfully," as Mr. Kipling's Babu says. After several weeks of this they were very tame and quiet, and I sent them home in a cage just high enough for them to stand upright in, and provided with a deep detachable tin

bottom which could be filled with water to give them a bath, the bottom of the cage itself being barred, as those of all travelling-cages should be.

Nevertheless, although every care was taken of them by Mr. C. Fawns, Steward of the "City of Oxford," who very kindly looked after them for me, only three survived the voyage. I think I should have sent them in a cage divided into more compartments. As it was, I had two only, with six birds in each, and, though there was ample room for any ordinary birds of the size, I fear these active but clumsy little things must have trampled each other.

The food presented no difficulty: paddy (raw unhusked rice) and canary-seed are eaten readily by these birds, and I found they would also take grass cut fine, as well as the maggots commonly given to insectivorous birds here. Naturally, they feed mostly on small shell-fish and water-weeds, pecking about on the surface more like a Waterhen than a Duck. They will dive for food on occasion, but not readily or neatly like a Duck, and when they tilt up their tails in ordinary duck-fashion, they do it as quickly as they possibly can, not standing on their heads for several seconds at a time like the others.

As I remarked above, they are very easy to tame; one I turned out on our large pond in the Museum grounds here, in a very few days began to swim to me whenever I appeared, as she laboured under the impression that I always had paddy secreted about my person. In this she was mistaken, for as the pond was full of natural food I did not feed her except occasionally; but she bore no malice for frequent disappointments, and stayed for some time, although full-winged when I turned her out. She was then too weak to fly away, as far too many of the poor birds fresh from the market are; indeed, many of these Teal cannot even stand at first.

I think the Cotton-Teal, if kept in a large aviary or well-protected pond, would probably be easy to breed; as I have seen the birds courting in the fine Duck aviary at the Calcutta Zoo. When they are doing this the drake bends down his bill so as to arch his neck and show off its showy whiteness, and jerks open his quills to display the otherwise concealed white patch. He is a gallant little fellow, and will not peck the gentler sex of his own species, as I had many opportunities of seeing when I had them closely confined. From what I saw, however, I think two drakes in a small space would probably damage each other



severely at breeding-time, like so many other Ducks. They build in holes at a moderate height from the ground.

Owing to the difficulty of procuring sound and steady birds for shipment, and the care they require on the voyage, this species is not likely to be readily obtainable for some time to come. Still, a few have reached England since I sent the first specimens above-mentioned, and, as everyone here admires the pretty quaint little birds, they only need to be better known to be thoroughly appreciated by amateurs of waterfowl, especially by those who have no room for big Ducks.

THE PINK-HEADED DUCK (*Rhodonessa caryophyllacea*).

This most extraordinary-looking bird differs from the Cotton-Teal in being very hard to get and very easy to manage when you have got it. Only a few birds annually come on sale in Calcutta, and these are expensive as wildfowl go here, but their habits are not such as to give rise to any difficulty in managing them, being very similar to those of the Mallard. The "Pink-header," as he is often irreverently called out here in India, is also much like that bird in size and shape, but is rather smaller and decidedly slimmer in build, the head and neck being almost gaunt in appearance. The wings are also shorter, for this Duck does not migrate, and, indeed, is not found outside India.

Its colour is most remarkable; the body is brownish black, with a fawn coloured wing-bar and the quills also shaded with that hue, while the head is pink—a bright rose-pink in the drake, and a dull smutty pink in the duck. Both have black feet, but they differ much in the colour of their bills, the drake's being fleshy white, and the duck's black. Young birds are light in colour below, and have heads of a sort of drab hue. The drake does not go out of colour to any great extent, only getting a black streak on the crown, which the duck always has.

This bird is allied, by the structure of the male's wind-pipe, and by the peculiar wing-pattern, to the Pochards, but it is a true surface-feeder in all its habits, although I saw one recently dive just as neatly as a Pochard, and stay under as long. But as some other Ducks were playing at the time, I think he was only in fun. Certainly one I kept for a long time on the Museum pond never attempted to dive for food as my diving Ducks do. The drake has a most peculiar two-syllabled call, which he often utters—something like "wugh-ah," with a metallic ring to it. The species has never, I believe, been bred in Europe, though it

has been not unfrequently sent home, and it lives well at our Zoo here. It is a ground-builder, and lays *round* eggs something like billiard balls; I have always considered it more curious than truly beautiful, but it always attracts notice, and is well worth attention on the part of anyone who can get hold of it.

#### THE BRONZE-CAP (*Eunetta falcata*).

This bird is very often dubbed a Teal, but it is really too big to fairly claim the title, being as large as the well-known Gadwall. Indeed, the females of the two birds are so much alike that it is as well to mention their points of difference explicitly. The female Gadwall, then, has more or less orange on the bill and feet, and a *white bar* on the wing, while the Bronze-Cap female has an entirely black bill, grey feet, and a *black wing-bar*.

The Bronze-Cap drake is a most beautiful bird, and would be preferred by many people to the gorgeous Mandarin himself, though personally I do not think any species can compare with him, as he has character as well as beauty.

The Bronze-Cap, however, is very lovely, with his silky copper-and-green head and mane, white neck, and body exquisitely pencilled with black and white lines, the whole set off by the long curved sickles formed by the innermost or tertiary quills of the wing. The tail-coverts are also peculiar, being so long that they reach to the end of the tail, giving the bird a rather stump-ended appearance; but their colouring makes some amends, the lower ones being rich cream-coloured and black. The wing-sickles are black laced with grey, and are the last parts of the full plumage to make their appearance.

The Bronze-Cap properly inhabits Eastern Asia, and was scarce and dear when Miss Hubbard wrote on Ornamental Waterfowl, and still remains so. I have never seen it in the London Zoo. Of late years, however, it has turned up pretty frequently at the Calcutta market, having been less uncommon in India than it was, so that I am in hopes, if the invasion continues, that some consignments may reach Europe hence. I know that a pair I got for my friend, Mr. W. Rutledge, were sold to go home and that the drake arrived safely. But as a rule drakes are hard to get, and almost all I have got lately have been ducks. I gave Mr. Fawns four the other day, and if any of these come on the market I should advise duck-keepers to try crossing one with a Gadwall drake. The hybrid would probably be fertile, and the pure stock could be secured by breeding back, as was formerly done with the Amherst and Golden Pheasants.

BAER'S POCHARD (*Nyroca baeri*).

This is another East Asiatic Duck which has taken to invading India of late years, and in considerable though now dwindling numbers. When it first arrived, as it was then not known from India and new to the London Zoo, I sent them specimens, and since then our Zoological Society has sent a further consignment.

Baer's Pochard is very like the familiar White-eyed Pochard, but differs from it by being rather larger and slighter in make; in having a deep green instead of mahogany-red head; and in showing a good deal of white on the flanks. As in its ally, the eyes are white in drakes and dark in ducks. The green-glossed head of the female makes her handsomer than any other female Pochard, these birds being generally so lamentably dowdy, and the drake does not go out of colour to any great extent, so that the species may fairly be called a desirable one. But it is not likely ever to be so popular as any of the others I have mentioned, supposing them all to be available in Europe at any time. Nothing, however, is known of its breeding-habits, so anyone who gets a pair and succeeds in breeding them will be adding a new fact to the history of the Duck family. The only interesting point I have myself noticed about the bird—and I have kept pinioned specimens on our pond at the Indian Museum for some years—is that it rises on the wing more readily than other Pochards, an observation I was able to make in the Duck Aviary at the Zoo here, where the birds are of course allowed the use of their wings. This, if it shows superior power of flight, may account for the somewhat erratic habits of the species, which is not regular in appearance even in its more proper haunts in China.

For some time it was thought to be a hybrid; and, certainly, when I first saw specimens in the market, I put it down as such, as I did not then know the species. But since then I have seen many, and there is no doubt it is a distinct form. Birds in the dusty-brown of immaturity are, however, very like young White-eyed Pochards, but may be easily distinguished by their larger size and darker crown, a young Duck of this species being as big as an old White-eyed drake.

---

## MY AVIARY.

By The Hon. Mrs. CARPENTER.

I find the accounts in the Magazine of other people's aviaries of such absorbing interest that perhaps even my humble efforts in this line may be interesting to other beginners. My first aviary was built three years ago, in April, 1897, against the glass west end of a conservatory, which thus protects it from the east and slightly warms that side of it. It is a cube of 7ft. to the eave of the roof which is a gabled one, sloping north and south. The lower half of the south side of the roof is of glass to let in more sun ; the upper half and whole north side of roof of boards covered with tarred felt.

The front of the aviary to the south is the only open side, covered with smallest mesh wire netting ; about 2ft. of the west side of glass, the rest of this side and the whole of the back of boards covered with tarred felt. The floor is of cement on a brick foundation, and raised about 8 inches off the ground.

In the winter a woollen blind is drawn down over the wire front of the aviary at night.

In this aviary I have kept for the last three years, with varying success, Parson Finches, Diamond Sparrows, Silverbills, Avadavats, Green Avadavats, Bronzewing Mannikins, Zebra Finches, Zebra Waxbills, a White - throated Finch, Combassous, Bullfinches, Goldfinches, Nonpareils, hen Greenfinches, and hen Canaries. Too many for breeding to be very successful, but I have bred a lot of Zebra Finches and twice Bronze-winged Mannikins, though of these last the only one that lived to come out of the nest was then abandoned by its one surviving parent (the hen having died soon after the young were hatched) and died in spite of my attempts at feeding it by hand. I also bred in this aviary a hybrid between a cock Siskin and hen Greenfinch, a very fine strong bird which I had brought up by hand when old enough, but which unfortunately escaped from its cage in the summer.

This is a very cold and damp place in the north of Yorkshire, and the birds have withstood 35 to 40 degrees of frost last winter, and intense damp cold this winter, and have all looked well and happy except hen Avadavats, hen Green Avadavats, and hen Combassous, which, though they did not actually die during the coldest weather, suffered from it and died last spring. The cock birds of all these species do not appear to mind the cold, but I noticed that the cock Avadavat, who has been out

two winters and was brilliantly red when I turned him out, has never come properly into colour again, having only patches of red about the breast all the year round. I consider the Silver-bills about the hardiest of all these birds. They never even look cold. I have also had a Long-tailed Grassfinch out all this winter and it seems perfectly hardy. It sings occasionally—a sort of weak Parson Finch's song—so I thought it was a cock bird, but have recently discovered it was sitting on a nestful of eggs, and as its only friend in the aviary is a cock Zebra Finch I am beginning to think it must be a hen bird in spite of its song. The eggs, however, have all turned out bad.

I afterwards added another aviary at the back of the first one, consisting of about 12 ft. by 7 ft. wire run, and a house with cement floor at the end for the birds to feed and roost in.

It is colder and less sunny than the other, but I have bred lots of Budgerigars and Canaries besides Redpolls and Linnets in it; and Saffron Finches nested, but were easily disturbed, and proved so quarrelsome—not to say murderous—that I had to get rid of them. The Budgerigars do not seem to mind any amount of cold, and nest all the year round. The water in this aviary is often frozen solid. I hope to let in more sunshine from the south-west by cutting down a tree. I am sure sunshine is almost the most important point to consider in choosing the site for an aviary.

---

## ODDS AND ENDS.

By REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

*(Continued from page 124).*

Since the foregoing was written, I have received Mr. A. J. Campbell's new book, "Nests and Eggs of Australian Birds," in which appears a remarkable statement made by the Director of the Zoological Gardens, Melbourne. Concerning a certain male Satin-bird in captivity, the author writes,—“It is interesting to learn that this bird did not don its full livery of blue-black till the fourth year.” Appended to this remark, a foot-note by the Director runs as follows:—“I think this particular bird must have been of mature years when Mr. Bailey first got it, as many years ago I caged a number (at least a dozen) of these birds at the gardens here, young green birds, caught at Gembrook, and it was only after the expiration of nearly *eight* years they began to change colour. I think four or five birds put on the beautiful blue-black plumage, and in a year or two died off. It is, there-

fore, evident that the birds only come to their full plumage in old age, and that accounts for the fact that in a flock of say one hundred birds, which we often used to see at Gembrook, some years ago, there would be only a very few, not half-a-dozen black ones among them. They die off shortly after the change." I cannot help feeling very strongly that the conclusions arrived at by the Director should be received with great caution. Birds in captivity do not always moult the same as in the wild state. Look at the Nonpareil, and even some of our British species ! I remember reading of a Naked-throated Bell-bird, I think in Germany, which one year, like my specimen already referred to, moulted from the green to the speckled plumage but, unlike my bird, *never* moulted into the pure white of the adult male, although moulting annually at the proper season. See also my notes below on the moulting of the Regent-bird. If the accommodation at the Melbourne Gardens is as unsuitable as at our own, and the food equally unsuitable (my Satin-birds would graze growing grass like geese, and lived mainly on growing vegetable matter, to which I added various fruits), it is quite conceivable that the development of the plumage into that of the adult may have been deferred. Again, the Satin-bird has all the appearance of a long-lived species, not one that would naturally die off in nine or ten years. That it should don its wedding plumage only in old age seems contrary to all experience. A creature that is slow to develop is a slow one to die is the almost universal law. If the Director's birds had been in their wild haunts, they would probably have carried the blue-black livery of the adult male for many a long year.

[Immediately after having penned the foregoing, I wrote to our fellow member Mr. Victor Castellan, asking him if he would kindly let me know what had become of the male Satin Bower-bird which he had purchased from me on the 13th July, 1898. This bird had shewn his first black feather on the 20th July, 1896, and completed his dark plumage in the autumn of 1897—more than three years ago. Mr. Castellan, in a letter dated 6th March, replies as follows :—"In reply to your note *re* Satin Bower-bird, I am glad to say that the specimen I bought off you is doing very well, and is very much alive. We find him a most amusing bird ; the variety of his calls is numberless. He also has the habit of collecting all the stones he can find in one corner of his aviary. I have also noticed that when he is in his outside flight in the summer he tries to stick bits of twigs and grass into the ground, but has so far never built a bower. His

plumage is beautiful, and in the sun a splendid shining blue-black. He has been so since I have had him." It will be seen, therefore, that this bird, which has been in full colour for three years and a half, is still "very much alive"; and, if no accident should occur, I shall be surprised if he does not continue to be "very much alive" for years to come. R. P.]

**THE REGENT BIRD.**—Although quite right as to the rarity of the Golden Bower-bird, Mr. Page is behind the times when he supposes (p. 69) that the Regent has not been imported. For some years it has been an occasional—but unwilling—visitor to this country; it has been represented at the London Zoological Gardens more than once; and even so recently as this latest month of February an adult male has been exhibited at the Palace—but its merits cannot be observed in a cage. I have had three specimens myself, and still have one—an immature male. Of the three species of Bower-birds which I have kept, taking all things into consideration, I prefer the Regent; but it is not nearly so robust as the Satin-bird, nor is it nearly so diligent, at least with me, in its building of bowers; but perhaps this is owing to the cold driving it so much into the house. There is a peculiarity about some (for they are not all constructed on the same plan) of the bowers of this species which I have never seen mentioned by any writer. Mr. Campbell does not speak of it; but unwittingly and very opportunely he seems to have supplied an explanation of the peculiarity of which I was wholly unconscious. In the exact centre of the bower, which I have not seen used as a "run," a "nest," of the size of a saucer, is carefully prepared; and all the bird's treasures, consisting in my aviary of small stones, are deposited in this "nest." Now let me quote from Mr. Campbell's new Book:—"Archie's own observations concerning birds he saw performing in this bower are: 'When first seen there were three birds playing in the bower; two were what we took to be males—but they were immature—and the other was a female. The antics they went through were extraordinary, and they were not in the least disturbed by our presence. One would go into the centre of the bower and, picking up a shell, of which there were three, would dance, half opening its wings and then tossing the shell in the air or over its head would run out. While this was going on the other two birds outside were scraping or sweeping the ground with their wings, and when the shell fell, one would pick it up and enter the bower to go through the same performance as the first bird, and so on. There were four or five

fresh young leaves in the bower at the time, and on visiting the locality the following afternoon, these were seen to be thrown out and four fresh ones placed in their stead.' " Although there does not seem to have been any special receptacle in the centre of this bower, yet the bird is stated to have gone into the centre of the bower for its shell, just where my Regent had a specially prepared Partridge-nest-like receptacle for his treasures. No pen can describe the antics of the bird when courting in the vicinity of his bower ; they are wonderful beyond description, much more so than are those of the Satin-bird, which are more ridiculous than any clown's foolery. But the writer of the foregoing account of the wild Regents and their bower is silent on a very interesting point ; perhaps he was too far off to hear. All my Regent's antics are accompanied by indescribable notes and noises, not loud, but all expressive and quite in keeping with the general weirdness of the performance. It is to a female Pied Rock-Thrush that my Regent pays homage, to the intense disgust of her own long-suffering mate. Talking of notes and noises, the Satin Bower-bird has a goodly collection, but the Regent has more, for it has a pleasing song. Hiding away in a sheltered corner, he will warble away by the hour, not loudly but softly and sweetly, rather like the Pied Rock-Thrush, but more varied. To what extent his notes are borrowed, I do not know. I notice that, a year ago, I likened the song to the suppressed voices of a very large flock of Starlings, all in their full spring song.

Concerning the plumage of this species, Mr. A. J. Campbell writes :—" The youthful male resembles the female ; the second year the bill is yellowish ; the third or fourth year the plumage is complete." My present bird, when received on the 4th August, 1899, had just a little yellow on the wings. During the moult of that autumn, he put on a trifle more yellow but no black. In July, 1900, he commenced growing a few yellow and black flights ; and during the autumn his bill became yellower, and the head assumed a faint wash of the same colour. Judging by my earlier specimens and this bird, and others I have seen, I think that the Regent either takes a longer period to come into full colour than Mr. Campbell supposes, or else that the due development of the colour is greatly retarded by the coldness of our climate, or the adverse influences of a life in captivity.

**THE PALACE SHOW.**—My reference to the Regent-bird at the Palace brings another thought to my mind. I think it is not unfair to suggest that if *Exhibitors* would be more



careful with their labels it would save much confusion. This year is not the first that Exhibitors' errors have brought an unfortunate press reporter into trouble. On the Saturday of this year's Show, I read a report of it in a London daily. The unfortunate wight who penned the report evidently didn't know a Waxbill from a Woodpecker, but thought he would be treading on safe ground if he commented on the first prize winners as printed in the catalogue. Accordingly, but with professional caution and vagueness, he spoke with lofty wisdom of the tenant of the cage which was catalogued as No. 2223, Blue-cheeked Barbet, winner of the first prize in Class 126—thus the catalogue be it remembered. On reading that a Blue-cheeked Barbet had won the first prize in this class, I expressed myself strongly to my Better-Half, declaring that the Show would not be worth the bother of a journey to the Palace if a bird so common, so easily obtained, so often exhibited, and one that keeps itself in health and plumage without troubling its owner, could be the best bird in the class. However, we came to the conclusion that it was just an incompetent judge—which was a little hard on the judge.

On the Monday, when I visited the Show, I found that all four of the birds exhibited in this Class by one gentleman had been placed in the wrong cages. On inspecting the cages, the Blue-cheeked Barbet and first prize winner of the catalogue and press reporter became a Regent-bird, the Regent-bird of the catalogue became a Sacred Kingfisher, the Sacred Kingfisher became a Masked Wood Swallow, and the Masked Wood Swallow became the Blue-cheeked Barbet, which looked queer, and had been altogether ignored by the unjustly-judged judge. This kind of thing is unfair to the visitors, and the refinement of cruelty to those members of the press who do not know a Hangnest from a Shâma (Vol. II., p. 91), or a Barbet from a Regent.

MICE.—Dr. Butler tells us (p. 78) of traps for birds. If somebody would tell us of traps which would catch mice in the midst of abundance of seed and other food, the whole avicultural world would rise up and call him blessed. I do not understand to what little gin traps Mr. Cooper refers (p. 86) which can be baited with sunflower seeds; will he not enlighten us? The mice soon learn all about traps and poison, and any new trap is a help. As to poison, I have raised a breed of mice here which, generation after generation, have been so successfully "inoculated" that they are practically immune. They will eat "Battle" regularly, and not only live but increase and multiply

upon it. I ventured to suggest adulteration to the chemist, but he pooh-poohed the idea ; and I suppose he was right, for one wandered into my neighbour's garden, and " caught " and killed his cat : at least it looked very much like it. One case was too remarkable to leave unrecorded. I have seen it stated that the females of various animals, when with young, are exempt from the usual deadly consequences of a snake's bite. I do not know if this be true ; and the following instance is not altogether to the point, as the poison from a snake's bite affects the system differently from that taken internally. Some sixteen months ago, a pair of mice discovered a sack of Indian millet in a spare but very full bed-room, and comfortably settled down. Before long, I detected the attack on the seed (which I removed), laid down poison, and killed the male. The female continued to live in the room, and, having nothing else to feed upon, took the poison freely, so freely that I took an interest in the case and let her have her fill. In due course she built a nest of scraps of paper, on a table, under a cloth (up which she used to climb) which covered various articles on the table. For as long as I dared, I spared the young, in the hopes of being able to catch the mother, still regularly feeding her with poison, spread as usual on thin bread and butter. Eventually I made a sudden raid on the nest, killed all the young, but missed the mother who had been in the nest. Shortly afterwards, she turned up in the dining-room, and established herself behind a book-case ; and there she remained for several weeks, for nearly three months I think, living on the seed scattered by the birds and occasional doses of poison. Then the birds were removed to their summer quarters in the garden, the room was " turned out," and the mouse killed. It was sickly, having a large growth on the neck, but was still alive although it must have eaten several packets of Battle's Vermin Killer, which I understand is principally composed of strychnine.

In the house I have been able to control the mice ; but in the garden I must confess that, this year for the first time, I have been discomfited, and am in despair. During the hard weather in February, I suppose they ran short of food, for I caught a few in break-back traps. On two occasions, when I inspected the traps in the morning, I found a mouse in a trap which had had its whole skull and brains devoured by the survivors. Mice that would do this would not hesitate to devour young birds in the nest, and even small adults in sleeping shelters. I have no rats here, nor any but the common house mouse, *Mus musculus*.

CATCHING BIRDS IN THE AVIARY.—The mention of traps leads us on to another thought, which it is to be hoped may prove the last, at any rate for the present. As most of us know, it is sometimes necessary to catch birds in the aviary ; and the larger the aviary the more important it is that the work should be carried out with our brains and not by means of the unscientific and dangerous net. In olden days, I used the net almost as a matter of course ; but I cannot too strongly condemn this the most usual custom. Of course one must and should use the net sometimes, but not as a general practice. Mr. Wiener I am glad to see (p. 59) does not favour the net. His plan of bringing the wanted bird down with the garden syringe is excellent when only a stray bird is required ; but it would not work well in a garden full of birds of many kinds when a number is required, as is the case here every autumn when a few dozens have to be transferred to their winter quarters. For some years now I have used traps, much after the manner described (Vol. VI., p. 75) by Miss Alderson, and with most satisfactory results. I now rarely use any trap but those which act only when I desire ; and more and more I have been discarding the very large ones in favour of those which can be carried bodily into the house with their prisoners, and readily carried back again and reset. Sometimes I use one which works on the principle described by Miss Alderson ; but I find that a modification of the sieve trap of our boyhood is by far the best in every way, being simple, handy, and easily made by oneself in some ten minutes. Take a piece of wire netting, of suitable mesh of course, some two feet square (it need not be square, but is best when nearly so), fold down the four edges to the width of about six inches, making a cut at each corner to enable the fold to be effected, interlace at each corner, and there you have in a minute a rectangular cover of netting which, falling over a bird, would make it a secure prisoner. Another piece of netting, fastened to a slight frame to enable the whole to be carried into the house, should be placed under the trap, and covered with sand and seed or other food. When the whole affair is lifted, the sand, seed, etc., slip through the wire and are left behind. Take a piece of dead, natural looking stick about six inches long, with which prop up the side of the cover nearest to where you propose stationing yourself, which should be out of the sight of the birds if possible. If the ground be soft, place a stone under the end of the stick to prevent it sinking into the ground. Fasten a piece of thin dirty old string (but not rotten) to the lower end of the stick, and carry the string moderately taut to your hiding-

place. The trap should be set firmly, so that it may not fall down except at your desire, and may be left for days until the birds regularly resort to it for their ordinary food. When you mean business, sprinkle fresh food in the trap or traps (I usually have at least two), and retire. When you see a goodly number of the birds you want *well under* the uplifted "sieve" or sieves (for at first great numbers will go in), pull the string or strings sharply and the birds are entrapped. Lay a piece of dark baize or cloth over each trap, to stop the prisoners from fluttering about, and then carry each trap bodily away. I may finish up by adding that, when you want to catch a bird in a cage with your hand, the plan of darkening the cage by placing something over it is very helpful. The bird in the dark will crouch down in a corner, and you can lay your hand on it and catch it without a flutter.

---

## AVICULTURAL NOTES.

By MISS HODGSON.

I have had an Orange Bishop (*P. franciscanus*) in my possession for 12 years, and this winter he has remained in full colour, though perhaps the orange is less vivid than it was in the summer. Hitherto he has always assumed the coloured plumage in July and lost it in November as the days became dark and foggy. We have not enjoyed much sunshine during the past winter, and early spring and November and December were exceptionally foggy here in Kent, so it is curious the bird should have preserved his brilliancy. My Napoleon Bishop (*P. melanogaster*), which I have had for about the same number of years, is in his usual brown winter dress. The birds are always fed in the same way and no change has been made in their mode of living. I believe some authorities say that the American Nonpareil (*Fringilla ciris*), goes "out of colour" in the winter. Mine moulted every feather in September, and has emerged from the moult in the most vivid and lovely plumage. I have not been so fortunate with Gouldians as Mr. Wiener and find them the most delicate birds I have ever kept. In fact, I am now trying to harden my heart against the temptation of their beauty and to abjure the species. They go on well during winter spring and autumn, but the excessive heat of the last two summers has invariably proved fatal, and each year I have lost my five or six lovely specimens in as many days. They mope for a day or two and then comes the end for no apparent cause. I have fed them most carefully with plenty of millet in the ear

and flowering grass (never given in a wet state) and Mr. Abrahams' seed mixture. They are not exposed to the sun after the early morning, when they have their bath. Afterwards my aviary cage is kept in a large cool drawing room with sun-blinds down when necessary. I fancy two of my deceased birds came from the same place where Mr. Wiener procured his stock. I do not consider myself unlucky with birds as a rule, and am able to keep the small rarer species of Waxbills successfully, and also Tanagers, Zosterops and Sugar Birds. I have had a hen *Dacnis cayana* for over two years in perfect condition. The only drawback to the Tanagers (of which I have three, Scarlet, Green-headed, and Blue-and-Black) is their occasional spiteful fits. The late Mr. Abrahams told me this would occur at the breeding season, and except with the Superb Tanagers, I find that their peaceable disposition returns after a few weeks. During their quarrelsome phases they drive the other birds about the cage, but do no actual harm, with the exception of the Superb Tanager, *Calliste fastuosa*. One I had slew first a Lavender Waxbill and then a Masked Grassfinch, after having been perfectly peaceable for six months previously. I have found the Violet Tanagers more delicate than the others. It is curious how the Shama delights in noise. I have had my bird "Drosselbart" for nearly seven years and he is a splendid singer, combining every good quality of a pet bird. I always go to London for a short time every spring; "Drosselbart" accompanies me and sings from morning till night. He revels in the various street noises and especially loves to reply to a boy whistling. The country seems now to strike him as rather dull, and he is less disposed to favour me with his music, though he likes to answer the thrushes in the rhododendron bushes on the lawn.

---

## THE ILLUSTRATION.

---

We are glad to include in this number a picture of the Demoiselle Cranes with young one, whose nesting was lately related by their owner, the Honble. Gerald Lascelles. We greatly regret to hear that the female has in the meanwhile fallen a prey to a fox, after living happily in captivity for years.

O. E. C., *Editor*.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## BOOK ON ORNAMENTAL WATERFOWL.

SIR,—A short time ago one of our members wrote to me asking for a book on Ornamental Waterfowl. I replied referring him to Mr. Finn's articles in the "Feathered World." It may, however, be of interest to our members generally to know that the articles by Mr. Finn are reprinted, and may be had in book form, under the title "Fancy Waterfowl."

J. LEWIS BONHOTE.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

SIR,—I have read with very great interest Mr. R. Philipps' notes in the "Avicultural Magazine" (February, p. 77) on a great favourite of mine, the Black-headed Sibia (*Malacias capistrata*). Having observed the species in a wild state—it is almost the most conspicuous bird at Darjeeling—I can bear witness to the accuracy of his observations. But I have here to complain of his objections to its name, and to those of other birds which have not descriptive English appellations. Now I yield to nobody in my admiration for our noble language, the more so as I am by early training a classical man, although I have always been a bird-lover, and of late years a professional naturalist.

Thus I do not like the pseudo-classical barbarisms with which scientific ornithological literature is loaded, although one must use them for the sake of accuracy of reference. And still less do I like the refusal to enrich the English tongue by the adoption of foreign words—for how otherwise is the language to grow? Of course one can use descriptive vernacular names—which, by the way, not everyone is competent to frame—but that is a clumsy way out of the difficulty, more suited to the German language than to the English. But the English way of dealing with a foreign bird has commonly been to adopt its native name, and I must say I think with excellent results, granted that people don't know what is meant at first; let them know that the name given is what the bird is called in its own country by its own human fellow-countrymen, and if it is worth noticing at all they will take to the outlandish name readily enough, if it be at all euphonious and possible of pronunciation.

This is not mere theory. Who would change the names of the Dhyal and Shâma, the Budgerigar and Lory, the Cockatoo and Cassowary? These names meant nothing at first, but people have now got used to them, more or less, according to the commonness of the birds in question. True, you may call a Budgerigar an "Undulated Grass Parrakeet," but you will not find many people to follow you; the name is too long for an essentially practical language like ours.

Now as to the Sibia; *Sibia* is the name given to the bird by the Nepalese, who know it as a native. It is not an ugly name, nor hard to say; and as the bird represents a very distinct and recognizable genus, it has surely a right to a name of its own. A Sibia is a Sibia, and there is an end of the matter; you can call it a Black-headed Tree-babbler if you like a descriptive name, but I would lay long odds on the real name winning in the long run.

The case of the *Struthidea* is different; *Struthidea* is not a native name, but one of those doggy Greek abominations which ornithologists delight in, and therefore a name which is only known to a comparatively small number of specialists, never having formed part of the vernacular of any people. Were it possible to call the bird something else I should much like to do so; but what can you call it? There is no bird I know of near enough to the *Struthidea* to share names with it. I don't happen to know what the natives and the colonials call it, but if their name is at all "possible" it should, I think, be adopted (a). A colonial name may not be correct, but it always expresses *something*, like a dealer's or schoolboy's. The Pekin Robin doesn't come from Pekin, and isn't a Robin; but he looks like one, and is found in China. Whereas his scientific title of *Liothrix* means simply "smooth hair," which is, I submit, merely silly—though I must plead guilty to often using it, because it is rather a pretty word, and a handy one.

The "descriptive name" naturalists give to this bird is the Red-billed Hill-Tit. But the bird is not a Tit, but a small Babbler, and there are plenty of real Tits in the Indian hills which form part of his wide range. The native names are *Nanachura* and *Rapchil-pho*; these, I submit, are not pretty or easy to say, and so in this case I think the dealer and the producer of modern scientific terms have a fair case against these particular specimens. The best argument I know in favour of the adoption of native names is the readiness of the outside public—i.e., non-birdy people, whom we all want to help—to adopt them. I know several New Zealanders in Calcutta, and I notice they all use Maori names in speaking of their native birds, so that I take it these are well-rooted among English people in that colony. So, in India, most people who use their eyes, know the black Cuckoo as the Koel, and call the Bulbul and Mynah by the same names as are used by the natives.

I have, I fear, written at what will seem to most of our members needless length on this subject. But I admire a fine language as well as a fine bird, and I should be sorry to see ours defaced, when it deals with aviculture—I would rather say bird-fancying, but I daren't here—by unwieldy Teutonic compounds, or by the appalling productions of naturalists who know, in most cases, as little of the classical languages as they do of live birds.

FRANK FINN.

#### RED-FACED FINCH.

SIR,—I have a male Red-faced Finch in a large flight cage with about fifteen other birds. He has been very bald on his back all the winter, and even now the feathers are not coming in. I took him out of the cage to see if I could do anything for him as I noticed one of the Zebra-finches pecking his back. It is swollen and very hot to touch and looks inflamed. I painted it with a little sweet oil, but should be glad if you can give me any advice on the subject. The bird is quite well otherwise and in good spirits, and I am most anxious to get him right, as he is a dear little bird and very tame, and, of course, he is one of the best birds I have.

I feed all my birds on white millet and canary seed, brown millet and

---

(a). Mr. A. J. Campbell, in his new book, calls the bird also the Grey Jumper, but adds that it is more frequently called the "Apostle Bird."—R. P.

spray millet. They have plenty of sand (Hyde's shell gravel), egg shells crushed, cuttle fish bone and green food. One or two of them have taken a long time to get through the moult, but I have never had one lose all the feathers on the back like this.

I shall be very much obliged if you can help me. I gave him Parrish's food in the water, and have now put him by himself in a cage so that the others cannot annoy him. I am also trying to get some sea sand for my birds as, perhaps, they require a change; but all the others, with the exception of one Spice-bird, are in very good feather.

I hope some of the members of the Society may be able to tell me what I should do. I do not know the age of my Red-faced Finch, but I bought him in Madeira three years ago, and he has never had anything wrong until this winter.

E. W. ROBERTSON.

---

*The following reply has been sent to Mrs. Robertson:*

The drawback to keeping the Ornamental Finches together in a cage is that they almost always peck one another's feathers out. I think it highly probable that the Red-faced Finch has suffered simply from the lack of other occupation on the part of the Zebra-finch.

Should he not recover his feathers when isolated, you will have to treat him for 'Surfeit' so-called, with four grains of Epsom salts and the same quantity of chlorate of potash in his drinking water for one day, but I do not think he will require this.

I prefer vaseline to sweet oil; it does not run into the feathers and disfigure the bird to the same extent.

Shell-sand is dangerous, on account of the sharp-edged chips of shell, which are apt to perforate the crop and so cause death: you will do well to use sea-sand. Do not wash the sand, as the salt in it is most beneficial to all birds.

A. G. BUTLER.

---

### "INTELLIGENT PETS."

SIR,—The article in last month's Magazine on "Intelligent Pets" was, in my opinion, most interesting, as no doubt nearly every member has his favourites. Among my birds the Grey Parrot holds premier position. It is a most accomplished talker, and values itself by repeating "Fifty pounds for pretty Polly." When I purchased this bird three years ago I was told it had been fed on "sop," and that its breast was bare because it was moulting. I knew better, however, and now that it gets no sop it is in splendid plumage. Among the "smaller fry" our greatest pet is a Shâma, which spends a great deal of its time out of the cage, and is so tame that it will readily fly and take mealworms from our fingers. It is very jealous of a Blue Robin which also feeds from our hands. The Shâma I consider a most interesting cage bird and I should be sorry to be without one. Why is it that hen Shâmas are so rarely advertised?

I trust that some of the wealthier members of the Society will favour us with photos and descriptions of their aviaries, as I am sure these articles would greatly enhance the value of the Magazine.

HEDLEY SPEED.



## THE SATIN BOWER-BIRD.

SIR,—I note in issue of Magazine just to hand (p. 123) Mr. Phillipps says: "I am surprised that Mr. Page should give the height of the Satin-birds' bower as 12 inches." In my article (p. 69) I stated clearly that most of the information it contained was culled from an article by Mr. A. J. Campbell, of Melbourne, in "Bird Lore," October issue, 1900, so that it is not really I that give the height as 12 inches but Mr. A. J. Campbell. I will now quote the passage *in extenso*: "The curious play house, or lovers' arbour is built upon the ground. It has apparently no connection with the nests, which may be any distance away. One of these bowers I collected in Xmas-tide 1884. It was situated amongst bracken in open forest. There was a cleared circular space about 26 inches across, in the ferns, floored with twigs well trodden down. In the centre were erected two parallel walls of pliable twigs, tapering and arching towards the top, which was 12 inches in height. The walls were about 10 inches long and 6 inches apart. In the avenue and round about were placed gay feathers of Parrots."

It would appear from Mr. Phillipps' experience that the Satin Bower-bird, in a state of nature, frequently changes the site of bower, or else, being at full liberty, it is otherwise engaged than in continuous building. For it would appear from Mr. Phillipps' facts that, even in a large aviary, they get hold of all the available material and go on building in the same place (I presume from lack of choice) till ultimately a huge structure is raised; which is not customary in their native haunts. If this is so, it points to the necessity of the aviculturist comparing his data with those of the field naturalist, to arrive at a correct conclusion.

I myself am convinced that the birds we keep, even in large outdoor aviaries, vary considerably in their habits and demeanour under such conditions from what they do when in full liberty. Though at the same time, as we know from experience, that valuable knowledge has been gained by the aviculturist, especially concerning song, method of courting, moulting, nidification, &c. For myself, I am sure that if a pair of Satin Bower-birds had an enclosure of sufficient size, they would construct a bower similar to that described by Mr. Campbell, and that given a plenitude of material, they would choose the shorter in lieu of the "2—3 foot poplar rod," which given plenty of choice is probably the last they would choose.

WESLEY T. PAGE.

P.S.—If Mr. Phillipps would care to have a look at the illustrations and peruse Mr. Campbell's article I shall be pleased to post it on to him—he can return same at his convenience, as I have only one copy (b).

W. T. P.

---

(b.) I am very much obliged, but I now have Mr. A. J. Campbell's excellent book.—R.P.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**

BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 8.

*All rights reserved.*

JUNE, 1901.

---

THE SHĀMA.

By E. W. HARPER, M.B.O.U., F.Z.S.

The Shāma is found generally throughout the greater part of India, from the base of the Himalayas to Ceylon; it also extends to Burmah. Its home is in the dense jungles, away from the haunts of men. The Dayal, on the other hand, which is first cousin to the Shāma, even at times courts human society; a pair of these birds has taken up its abode in a garden in the centre of Calcutta, and I have seen the cock bird approach to within six yards of the house. The Shāma lays four eggs in a nest composed of dry grass and leaves, generally in a bank or hole of a tree near the ground. Although shy and retiring in its habits, it has the pluck of a game Bantam cock. A hen Shāma, which is now in my possession, quickly asserted her authority over a cock White-capped Redstart and a cock Niltava Flycatcher, which were in the same aviary. Even larger birds, such as Orioles, have to keep their distance, owing to the pugilistic attitude of the lady Shāma, when a dainty morsel of food is offered; for she opens her long tail like a fan and spreads her wings forward and downward in a most threatening manner.

Shāmas are caught wild and also reared by hand in fairly large numbers, but I never heard of their having been bred in captivity in India; although Mr. Phillipps has done so in England. This is chiefly owing to the fact that there are so few aviculturists in India. Amongst Europeans, I doubt if there are a dozen enthusiastic aviculturists in the whole peninsula. Natives would not take the necessary trouble; especially when young birds can be purchased for three shillings or four shillings each in the towns, and probably much less up-country. The hen Shāma is rarely seen in captivity; but her lord and master is one of the most favourite cage-birds amongst the natives. He

ranks with the Greater Racket-tailed Drongo as being the finest songster in the East.

The Shâma has a "regulation" cage in India—just as Larks, Thrushes, and Linnets have in England. It is shaped like a gipsy's waggon; round at the top, and entirely open—top, sides, end, and bottom. The bars are of cane, wire, or brass; according to the pocket of the owner. There is no false bottom; a piece of cloth being placed upon the floor of the cage, which is scraped occasionally. The cage is about 18 inches long, 8 inches high, and 8 inches wide, with the door in the middle. Two perches are placed across the cage, about 2 inches from the bottom and 3 inches from each end. Food and water are always put inside the cage, and the whole is wrapped up tightly in a cotton cloth. The size of the cage and the position of the perches prevent the poor bird from flicking its magnificent tail without damaging it.

The cruel practice of covering up the cage night and day with a cloth is universal amongst natives, without exception. I have frequently asked a man's reason for doing so, and have been informed that it is "the custom"; another man will tell you that the bird will catch cold, if uncovered; others say that the wind will ruffle the bird's feathers and make him look less sleek. The general belief is that the bird, seeing nothing to attract its attention, has more leisure for singing. One man, who tried to be very eloquent, stated that by covering up the cage the bird sang both day and night! that man was a veritable Shylock, and demanded his "pound of flesh" even from the poor Shâma.

The size of a Shâma's body is about equal to that of an English Robin; its tail measures about 6 inches. The colouring of the male bird is well described in Dr. Butler's "Foreign Bird Keeping," part I. The female has the white rump as in the male; but the upper parts of the body which are black in the male are slaty brown in the female; and the rich chesnut breast of the male is replaced by a rufous one in the female. The young of both sexes are brown, spotted with rufous. Oates, in his "Birds of British India," places the Shâma between the Robins and the Ouzels.

Regarding the food of this bird in captivity, perhaps it would not be out of place to describe how he fares when his owner is a native. The staple food is peameal well mixed with "ghee" (refined butter) to a stiff paste: about a teaspoonful of live maggots are also given daily, as well as a few grasshoppers;

and drinking water *ad libitum*. Up-country, where maggots are not commonly bred, white ants and a little raw lean meat take their place. That is the sole diet of the Shâma, and he thrives on it. I heard of one bird which lived for 14 years and was then killed by a rat!

It may be asked, How about the live maggots? Nothing is simpler. Here in Calcutta we have the maggot-man, just as London has its cats'-meat-man. He comes round every morning, starting as soon as it is light, with his can of maggots and his bag of grasshoppers. He charges me Rs.2 (2s. 8d.) per month, and gives me about four tablespoonfuls of live maggots and some grasshoppers every day. He tells me that he has about 40 houses to visit during his morning round; so he must make a fairly good living—considering that the average pay of native servants is from Rs.10 to Rs.15 a month. He employs a boy to catch the grasshoppers and “breed” the maggots. This is done by putting damp cow-dung mixed with a little blood from the slaughter-house into a sack, open at the top and hung up. The contents soon become fly-blown; and the maggots, working their way downwards through the sack, fall into an earthenware vessel placed to receive them. They are cleansed with dry earth, and finally shaken up with a little peameal to receive their final “polish.” A gallipot for single birds, or a small trough for an aviary, I have found most convenient for putting the maggots into; they never attempt to crawl out unless they get wet. The great advantage of maggots over mealworms is that the former are produced so quickly; they never get more than half-an-inch in length, however.

The Shâma is “taken out for a walk” every evening after the heat of the day is over; that is to say, his owner or his owner's servant goes for a walk and takes the cage containing the bird—always covered—with him. It is quite a common sight to see a man carrying very carefully a cage in each hand; the little occupants frequently bursting into song. My experience is that you get more genuine singing in a pleasant subdued tone from a Shâma when his cage is never covered up; on the other hand, I think the bird does more “loud shouting,” though at much less frequent intervals, when the cage is always covered.

Shâmas get extremely attached to anyone who feeds them. The hen bird, to which I have already referred, delights in being talked to. She comes close to the wires of her aviary and, if caressed by the voice, puffs out her feathers and sings with all

her might ; her large gazelle-like eyes seeming to dance with delight. I am not exaggerating about the eyes ; anyone who has kept this species must have noticed their size, which quite equals those of a Starling—a very much bigger bird.

In an aviary of decent size the Shâma always remains on or near the ground during the day ; often taking a darting flight into the air, accompanied by a *click* of the voice and a sudden spreading of the tail ; at night it naturally roosts upon a perch.

Moths, butterflies, grasshoppers, worms, beetles, cockroaches, spiders, flies, and bits of raw lean meat are amongst the dainties that tickle a Shâma's palate.

The dealers in Calcutta tell me that most of the exported Shâmas go to Germany ; some enterprising individuals bringing mealworms all the way to India from the Fatherland, for use on the voyage.

## MISCELLANEOUS EXPERIENCES OF OUTDOOR AVICULTURE.

By WESLEY T. PAGE, F.Z.S.

"Can much be done with only one aviary?" is a question frequently asked. I answer most decidedly, yes. But in the first place the aviculturist must decide as to the course he intends to pursue. If breeding is to be his paramount aim, then he must content himself with small numbers and variety ; say six, or at most, seven pairs of birds, in an aviary of say 20ft. long, 3ft. to 4ft. wide, and 6ft. to 8ft. high. But even thus the young must be disposed of as they assume adult plumage—or a second aviary of equal size, kept merely as a flight, erected for their accommodation—otherwise they will upset their parents' breeding arrangements, in fact almost nullify them.

On the other hand, if the aviculturist decides on number and variety, then he can have in the same space 50 or 60 birds. But while he will gather a lot of useful general information, his breeding experiences will be few and far between, though under such conditions I have reared numbers of Zebra and Ribbon Finches, Java Sparrows, Cockatiels, and similar common stuff, with interest and pleasure, if not profit ; but that is a minor matter with the earnest aviculturist ; he is athirst for knowledge and counts not the cost of anything within his means. Now as to variety, what may we keep together ? What I am about to say, I am afraid many of our members will consider very

unorthodox, if not rank heresy ; be that as it may, I am simply stating what I have done (*experientia docet*) and am still doing. If others will adopt the same precautions, they will succeed in the same, and possibly greater measure. Now for the birds I have kept, and still keep together in the same enclosure.

Waxbills in variety including the small *Sporæginthus subflavus*, a fairly representative series of Mannikins, Grassfinches, Grey Java Sparrows, a few Buntings, and a pair of Cockatiels.

Methods of procedure. Do not get some of all the above, and loose them into your aviary straight away ; this would simply invite disaster. Get first some Waxbills, and let them have the aviary to themselves for a month, by that time they will know their way about and take care of themselves.

Next introduce a pair or two of Grassfinches, watching carefully those of larger size till their demeanour is ascertained.

Mannikins may follow; these are generally quite harmless, excepting the Magpie Mannikin (*Amauresthes fringilloides*), which had better be left out, unless the enclosure be very large ; for although he seldom does much harm, in the event of a quarrel, a blow from his powerful beak would be fatal, even to a bird fully his own size.

Saffron Finches must be introduced with caution, carefully watched, and at once removed if they become at all combative ; and only one pair must be kept. But in spite of the evil reputation they enjoy, I have had a very amiable pair for several years, which have never done any mischief ; I have only the cock now; the hen died last summer while I was ill, egg bound for want of lime-rubbish I suspect. Your birds fare but poorly as a rule when you cannot attend to them yourself.

The same care must be exercised as to Weavers; and as they scarcely ever attempt to breed, though they build numbers of their interesting and cleverly woven nests, it is as well to limit the supply to one or two cocks ; for instance, the Orange, Madagascar and Red-billed species.

The Cockatiels should be introduced the second year ; then they seldom do any mischief ; mine have never done any.

Green Singing Finches and Pekin Robins are inveterate egg eaters, unless the aviary be very large ; otherwise they are handsome and charming birds.

Now I can almost hear someone saying, "What about tragedies?" Well, I have never had any, not a single death

which I could attribute to violence, excepting when I first turned the Cockatiels in. No sooner had the larger Finches got over the scare caused by the introduction of large birds into their midst, than they set to work to mob them ; and a Saffron Finch and a Greenfinch were mortally wounded in the scrimmage. The next day there was a declaration of peace, which has not been broken since, though four years have run their course.

Favourites.—Well, I suppose we ought not to have any as aviculturists ; however this may be, there are some that by their artless and confiding ways insinuate themselves into a first place in our affections. At the head of these, with me stand the beautiful little Zebra Waxbills with their taking ways, funny little love dance, fearless, happy and confiding demeanour under all circumstances ; these, coupled with their extreme hardiness and longevity, give them the first place.

Silverbills.—These are very entertaining birds, of quiet, dainty appearance, having a soft, sweet running sort of song ; the quaint, ridiculous (from our standpoint) courting of the male, coupled with their trustful and confiding demeanour, cause them, I think, to win their way with all.

I have been surprised to find these described as exclusive seed eaters, and as never, or scarcely ever, touching green food. Mine certainly eat mealworms, gentles, and ants' cocoons, and also visit the soft food saucer, picking up some dainty tit-bits. They also regularly eat a little green food, and eagerly search it over for aphides, of which they appear to be very fond. This causes me to infer that, in common with all other Finches, they largely rear their young on insect food ; they have never, however, bred in my aviary (too much company). While speaking in general : Waxbills, for obvious reasons, most readily win their way with us. I must confess to a strong liking (some will perhaps think it depraved) for Mannikins. In a fair sized aviary I find them active, entertaining and full of interest with their quaint ways. The impudent, cheeky, self-assertive little Zebra Finch, so active in blowing his own little trumpet, is a favourite everywhere.

There are many birds which, while lacking the seductive traits of those particularized above, command a place in our collections by reason of their rarity and little known habits, striking and handsome plumage, or diversity between winter and summer dress. I will name a few, not going over a long list, but keeping in mind the aforesaid outdoor aviary mixed series.

Indigo Bunting and Nonpareil Bunting.—I have not kept these two together, but, from one of our members' experience, should think it possible to do so.

Orange Weaver, Madagascar and Red-billed Weavers.—The Torquoisine may be kept in lieu of the Cockatiels if preferred, or a pair of each if the aviary is not less than 30ft. long.

I have not yet kept either Parrot or Gouldian Finches out of doors. I am convinced that they can be so kept (a).

I find I have omitted the beautiful little Chinese Quail. A pair of these should certainly be kept. They not only give variety, being ground birds, but practically live on the seed the other birds scatter on the floor; thus they not only charm, but help to starve out the mice. They also need soft food and a few insects.

Winter.—This is usually looked upon as a trying time for the out-door aviary—so it is for the aviculturist attending to birdy wants in rough weather—but for the birds themselves I do not find it so; the trying time is damp, wet weather, whether it occurs during the heat of summer or cold of winter; dry cold does not hurt or cause inconvenience to the majority of foreign birds. At least they appear to feel it less than our native Britishers. The little Zebra Waxbills, during the sharp frosts and bitter winds of the past month (March), have been the merriest, happiest little creatures in my aviary, taking their morning tub as if it were mid-summer, and spending their time cuddled up in a ball and shivering! Oh dear no! but on they go, flitting here and there, chirping and trilling from morn till night. The Zebra Finch is I know noted for its hardiness: but one little fellow this year began to moult early in March last, and he has come triumphantly through it, and is now (April 3rd) as saucy and impudent as it is possible for a Zebra Finch to be. This might have passed my notice, for these cold wet days I have done little but just give them their necessary food and away again; but one of my sisters told me one of my Zebras was looking queer, so I went and had a look at him; he came at once to one of the front branches, and, though looking out of sorts, blew his ridiculous little trumpet with all the assurance and cheek in the world. I saw at once what was the matter, gave him a piece of egg as a dainty bit, and increased same in soft food, and now he is A 1 again.

---

(a.) I reared a brood of five young Gouldian Finches in an exposed outdoor aviary last November, which speaks well for the hardiness of the species.—D. S.-S.



In looking through my notes, I find that on many occasions my birds have eaten the grass, etc., growing in the aviary, before the sun had removed the frost from it. I suppose our native birds do the same, for most of their food must be covered with frost during many of winter's days. I have also seen my birds partaking of seed that had stood all night in the aviary and was thickly coated over with frost. I also give my birds garden green stuff, just as taken, during wet weather, and it is freely eaten with no harmful result. At the same time such *must not* be offered to birds in cages or indoor bird-rooms.

Moulting and change of plumage.—At this period I always increase insect food. All Finches, aye, and Waxbills too, seem glad of it at this time ; and I am convinced the lustre of their plumage is added to by its use.

As regards Avadavats, I have nothing further to add to what I have already stated in the Magazine. Their time of moult and assumption of court dress have been as hitherto. I may say, in passing, that my first pair have now spent six winters out of doors, and are still in perfect health and trim.

My Indigo Bunting I have had with me but two winters ; its time of moult and coming into colour, are about the same as that of our native Chaffinch. It is now (April 3rd) just come into full colour, and is a perfect picture. When out of colour there is a good bit of dull blue about the upper parts, and also subdued patches underneath. I cannot discover that any feathers are shed during the change from winter to breeding plumage.

*Re* Red-billed Orange and Madagascar Weavers.—As regards all three, I am forced to the conclusion, after four years of close observation, that in the parts affected by the change, from winter to breeding plumage, *the whole of the feathers are shed*, and the change is thus brought about and not by a growth of colour in the plumage. I have handled the birds during the change, and have seen for myself the pin feathers, and some further advanced with the sheath burst and the brighter coloured feathers shewing ; have also observed them at these times pulling out their feathers as they do at the ordinary moulting time. In fact their demeanour on both occasions is practically the same, the feathers shed may be picked up about the aviary (*b*).

---

(*b*). Most of the Weavers moult the feathers of the crown, nape, upper and lower tail coverts, and posterior flank-feathers, during the change to the summer dress. The Indigo Bunting certainly moults the crown feathers, for I had a dead one sent to me recently showing the new feathers coming on the crown ; but, on other parts of the body, some of the feathers were particoloured, and some faintly washed with blue. I gave the specimen to the Nat. Hist. Museum.—A. G. B.

When I first got my Zebra Waxbills I expected them to go out of colour in the winter, but I find this is not so. The only difference is that after the autumn moult the breast lacks the rich orange tint of breeding plumage; just now they are almost in full court dress.

I may say that, in my aviary, although the nest boxes only get an annual clean, red mite (the curse of indoor aviaries and cages) is unknown.

On a second looking through my note book, I find an entry, *re* the Chinese Quail, to the effect that these pretty little birds seem semi-nocturnal in their habits. They certainly sleep during the heat of our summer afternoons, and are very active during the twilight of our summer evenings, and I also think during part of the night, for when I have gone, as I mostly do during summer, down the garden the last thing to have a look round, I have on many occasions seen them scuttling off to their shelter (a square patch of sand, raised 6in. above floor level with a sloping board over it, leaving only the front open) at 12.0 midnight.

I hope that in this rambling avicultural chat there will be some items of interest.

## THE ZOSTEROPS.

By the Rev. C. D. FARRAR.

Years ago, I remember that Zosterops were amongst the rarest of the rare; of late years they have been more plentiful. I know of few birds more beautiful in a quiet way than these pretty little things, and they have the merit of hardiness. That no one need be anxious about the Zosterops on the score of cold or climatic changes is pretty evident, when I say that all this last winter I have had some of these out of doors in a perfectly unheated aviary in Yorkshire. A friend was over one morning, and he would hardly believe that I really had them out until I shewed them to him, spry and active. "Well," he said, "I should have thought the first slight frost would have finished them off."

I am very fond of my little spectacled friends, and generally succumb when I am offered any by the dealers. Not long since, I got a letter one morning offering Zosterops at a reasonable rate. I wired that I would have a pair if in good condition. I say this because usually Zosterops come over nearly naked. For some reason or other, overcrowding most

likely, they take to feather plucking on the voyage, and when they arrive in dock all are minus their feathers but perhaps one or two. The dealer said he had one pair 'fair,' the rest in the usual condition. I wired off—"How many are there?" The reply soon came flashing over the wires—"There are six more bally Zosterops." I replied—"Send the six bally Zosterops," and the next morning they came to hand. A more ragged regiment I never saw. They had hardly a feather among them; just head, flight, and tail, the rest naked body! Poor little beggars, how they did shiver! I put them each into a nice clean cage, gave them half an orange, and a good bath. How they did enjoy themselves to be sure. They soon began to mend, and after about six weeks' solitary confinement, each in his little cage apart, they came into the most perfect feather, and I only wished my dealer friend could have seen his poor 'bally' scarecrows; but then, how the price would have gone up by leaps and bounds!

Zosterops are very affectionate little things, and always go off in pairs as far as they will go.

I think I have seen it said somewhere that Zosterops have no song. This is a great mistake. The cock Zosterops has a most beautiful song, almost equal to the English Blackcap. The first time I heard one open out, I wondered what bird it was.

A pair of Zosterops would be simply invaluable in a greenhouse, as they revel in green fly, that pest of the flower grower, and they would do no harm to the most tender plants; but then conservatory owners are such unreasonable beings!

I feed my Zosterops on my home made soft mixture, and half an orange a-day. They are intensely fond of bathing, and get so wet that they can only stagger about the cage for quite a long time after. They are very active little mites, and creep in and out among the shrubs, and hang head downwards like our English Tits; and it must be a wily gnat indeed that can escape their sharp little eyes.

I may say, for the sake of the unlearned and ignorant, that 'Zosterops' means 'girdled eyes'; hence the name Spectacle birds.

My ambition is to breed the Zosterops; the only thing I wonder about is, on what they feed their young? I think it must be minute insects like aphides and gnats. They are very fond of stewed apple well sweetened with sugar. They do not care for insects of the mealworm order.

As it grows dusk you can hear quite a chorus of anxious calls and twitterings, until each little partner cuddles up to its mate and settles down for the night.

I have had two sorts of *Zosterops*—the Chinese and the Australian; the latter is a little larger than his Chinese brother and more brown.

The young birds can be told by their very greenery-yallery heads; when adult they are beautiful mossy-green. I should think that *Zosterops* must be capital show birds, as they are so tame and familiar, and none can make them afraid.

Death, when it comes to these little birds, usually comes suddenly in the form of a fit. I sometimes find one dead on the floor, a perfect ball of fat and every feather perfect.

They are wonderfully cute little things and soon know me by sight, and hardly wait for me to put the stewed apple in their pot before they are down—putting it away as fast as they can, and vigorously scolding any other unfortunate bird that dares to approach their dainty. Of course this scolding is all bunkum—for they couldn't hurt a good healthy bluebottle fly.

When flying about the enclosure they always keep in touch with each other by their call-note; and there is quite a commotion if one gets lost for a minute in some bush or fails to answer when time is called!

To anyone who desires a tame, hardy, engaging little couple, I would say, give *Zosterops* a trial.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### EAGLE OWLS.

SIR,—In reply to the query of how to distinguish the sexes of Eagle Owls otherwise than by size, I can inform Mr. Leigh that the voices of the two sexes are entirely different: the call of the cock being a single deep 'boo,' that of the hen a triple note—'ho-ho-ho,' and uttered in a higher pitch. Also the wings of the cock reach nearer to the end of the tail when folded than do those of the hen; this will be noticed in all the Owls that are short-winged, and in most of the raptorial. I do not think that Eagle Owls ever lay their first season, but I have known several instances of their breeding when two years old. And again, some do not breed for five or six years.

E. G. B. MEADE-WALDO.

### NESTING OF GREEN-WINGED DOVES.

SIR,—Though many of our members seem to keep the Indian Green-winged Pigeon, I have seen no note on the nesting of these birds.

In September, 1899, my Green-wings first showed signs of pairing. The cock would frequently coo to and caress his mate. While courting he depressed the head and breast, raising the closed wings over his back, thus presenting the whole of his glittering green plumage to his lady love.

The pair soon took possession of an old Turtle Dove's nest in a birch branch, carrying in a few twigs, but before any eggs were laid the cock was unfortunately killed by a cat.

I soon procured another mate for the hen, and last September she again seemed anxious to nest. The cock, however, though friendly, took little interest in her proceedings. No nest was made, but two very small, round eggs were laid in a basket lid. She commenced to sit, but seeing that the eggs were useless, I broke them and found them to be yolkless.

About a fortnight later two more eggs were dropped from a perch. So far as I could judge these were normal.

As the enclosure in which these birds are kept is not sparrow-proof, their food consists almost entirely of maize. Would this account for imperfect eggs? The birds seem to be in excellent condition.

B. C. THOMASSET.

---

#### NOTE *RE* BLACK-TAILED GODWIT.

SIR,—Last Spring I received several Black-tailed Godwits, all of which arrived with their wings cut, and towards the end of November it became evident that they were not getting through their moult; besides being dirty, with their feathers all glued together, their feet had large lumps of dirt adhering to them which accumulated again and again almost as fast as it was removed, and this was not due to the ground of their aviary, which was made of fresh turf and shingle, being dirty.

About Christmas-time, being reminded in an article I read that birds with cut or broken quills were often unable to cast them in the moult, I caught them up and removed the stumps from three of them, leaving them on a fourth individual who had succeeded in moulting the first two primaries. They were then removed from their outdoor quarters and placed in an indoor (but unheated) aviary, having the floor thickly covered with sawdust. One of them died almost immediately, and of the others, those whose stumps I had removed are now once more in perfect health and plumage; while the third, whose primaries had not been drawn, is still in the same state of dirty feathers and clogged up feet, although it has been kept under precisely the same conditions.

I have ventured to write this note as, while it is fairly generally known that to remove the primaries and place the bird in a warm place is often efficacious in backward moult, yet it is worth while noting its far-reaching effects, as general slovenliness and dirty feet are not usually associated with moult.

J. LEWIS BONHOTE.

---

#### THE REGENT-BIRD; SKINS OF DEAD BIRDS.

SIR,—Permit me to thank Mr. Phillipps for bringing me up to date *re* Regent-bird. I had no recollection of seeing them advertised—foolishly, I did not turn up my copies of Proceedings Zoological Society or I might have satisfied myself there.

I did not succeed in getting to the Crystal Palace Show until Saturday afternoon, and I do not think the bird could have been on exhibit at the time I looked round. I find it hard to believe that I could have overlooked so noticeable and comparatively rare an exhibit. Will Mr. Phillips kindly say if it was in full colour? (c)

If any of our members at any time lose such foreign birds as Starlings, Bower-birds, Shamas, Parrakeets, or the more tender and delicate insectivorous and frugivorous species generally, and they do not require the skins for themselves, I should be very glad if they would post them on to me, and I would thankfully acknowledge the same, with cost of postage.

W. T. PAGE.

### BREEDING THE RED-FACED FINCH.

SIR,—I have a pair of *Pytelia afra* sitting on either two or three eggs, and should be much obliged if any of the contributors to the "Avicultural Magazine" could tell me what I should do about food for the young birds, should the parents be successful in hatching them out. The birds have been sitting for a week, and one of them is always in the nest; they take it in turns, and are sitting very well. Their nest is in a small basket tied inside their cage. I have had the male bird for three years, but only got the hen on the 20th March this year.

I should also be glad to know if the *Pytelia afra* has ever been bred in this country.

I feed them on canary, millet, spray millet, and green food; but perhaps the young birds may require soft food if they hatch out. I am not sure how long the period of incubation is, and should be glad to know.

E. W. ROBERTSON.

*The following reply has been sent to Mrs. Robertson:*

You should certainly give the birds daily, in addition to their seed, a small pan of soft food:—two parts crushed sweet biscuit to one part yolk of egg, and one part of ants' eggs, moistened; if you could get fresh ants' eggs it would be better; if not I would recommend you to put a few small mealworms in for them daily.

I cannot discover that the Red-faced Finch has ever been bred, although Mr. Hawkins had a hen which deposited several eggs on the floor of its cage.

A. G. BUTLER.

### BALDNESS IN BIRDS.

SIR,—I see in your issue of May, 1901, a reply to Mrs. Robertson with regard to her treatment of a Red-faced Finch.

I studied most carefully the question of bald birds, and I never found a single case arise from pecking, nor did I find oil or vaseline of any use.

If Mrs. Robertson cannot cure her bird, and she likes to send it to me after June 10th, I will treat it. I have never failed to get my birds into good condition.

E. E. COPE.

(c) Yes; but it was not particularly noticeable, cooped up in a cage. The laxity of the Show officials in allowing rare birds to be carried away in order that they may be drawn or painted is most reprehensible. See my remarks at page 22 of the current volume.  
R. P.

## TAWNY OWLS.

SIR,—I should be glad if you or any of your readers could tell me (1) What weight of meat or liver per diem a full grown Tawny Owl requires to keep in good health? (2) How long their eggs take to hatch? (3) At what age are the young able to feed themselves? (4) Do they commence nesting as early as the beginning of April? I think mine must have commenced nesting on the 6th, but I have been afraid to watch them very closely for fear that they might desert.

CHAS. CUSHNY.

---

*The following reply was sent to Mr. Cushny :*

(1) The amount of meat for a full grown Tawny Owl would be about one-third the size of a rat or a little over, supposing it to be all lean. Young birds after the first moult would require as much, if not more. I generally fast all my Owls once a week, but it would not be advisable to do so if they were nesting. They require some fur in the shape of rats or fowls' heads frequently, and the more freshly killed the better.

(2) The duration of incubation is, I believe, a little over three weeks.

(3) The young are able to feed themselves at about a month or five weeks old; but in a wild state they are fed by the parents for over two months, as they are unable to capture their own food.

(4) They are one of the earliest English birds to nest, eggs being frequently found in March.

J. LEWIS BONHOTE.

---

“WHAT'S IN A NAME?”

SIR,—In my little sketch of the Black-headed Sibia, I made a statement respecting the species which has not been confirmed by my further experiences of the bird, and which I shall be obliged if you will kindly give me an opportunity of modifying. At the top of page 77 of the current volume, I said, “they mainly rely on their spring for taking their prey, never flying like a Flycatcher.” This year my Sibias, although not taking their prey quite in the orthodox Flycatcher fashion, will fly any distance that their aviary will permit after winged insects, and evidently prefer this form of food to any which it is in my power to supply.

I cordially thank Mr. Finn for the information he gives us (p. 145) about this attractive species, and agree with most of what he says. Nevertheless, taking as an instance a bird to which he refers, one in which I take much interest and a pair of which I have kept, it must be admitted that the word “Koel” conveys absolutely no meaning whatever to the majority of English readers, whilst the name “Cuckoo” awakens some glimmer of intelligence in the mind of even the densest Britisher. Why, the late Mr. Abrahams was unacquainted with the name “Koel,” when I applied it a few years ago to a male “Indian Cuckoo” which he had in his shop!

A new bird has somewhat recently arrived in this country, common enough in India I suppose, but hitherto unknown to us poor stay-at-home bodies. I refer to the Rufous-chinned Laughing-Thrush. Now this is as unwieldy a name as “Black-headed Tree-babbler,” but it gives us an idea of the bird and of the species, whereas “Rufous-chinned Trochalopteron” or “Rufous-chinned Ianthocincla” would be a mouthful to swallow all at

once, and could hardly be called an improvement. Possibly there may be some suitable native name with which we are not acquainted.

The title "Rufous-chinned Laughing-Thrush" I have taken from the London Zoological Society's Report for 1900; and following this name I find mentioned the "Western Yellow-winged Laughing-Thrush" and the "Slaty-headed Scimitar Babbler." These truly are dreadful names, but they convey a certain amount of meaning, and should not be rejected without good reason.

To return to *Trochalopectum rufigulare*, the title "Laughing-Thrush" is a little deceptive if my two birds are fair representatives of the species. Excepting when handled, the female has so far been mute. The male goes about chuckling to himself in a scarcely audible tone as he gathers nesting materials or hunts for insects and seeds, and occasionally utters a low scolding note; but he is exceptionally quiet, and never whistles or sings after the pleasing manner of some of the Laughing-Thrushes; that is, he never laughs outright, but keeps all his little jokes to himself. The word "seed" I use tentatively, for I can only say positively that they are rather fond of oats, which they shell by means of powerful blows with the bill, swallowing only the kernel.

Totally unlike the Sibias, they are very fond of the ground, never running but progressing by hops and bounds; and the speed with which they can scuttle over the ground and about the thickets is astonishing. My pair, by the way, are building in an elder bush; but the Sibias seem more shy, and have not progressed beyond the kissing stage.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

---

### SICK GOULDIAN FINCHES.

SIR,—I shall be very glad if you will kindly help me as to the treatment of a Gouldian Finch.

Last Wednesday I received a pair from London, freshly imported birds I expect. I was delighted with them, as they were the healthiest and sprightliest birds I have ever seen come off a journey. They are both in perfect plumage. I have kept them for one day in a wooden cage, and then turned them into a large cage, full of Parson Finches, Grass Finches, and other smaller birds.

They were quite peaceable for a day, but I noticed the cock beginning to look puffed out, and getting worse daily. Finally I had to remove them, as he was bullied by a Parson cock. Now he sits all day hunched on a perch, and has begun to make a noise with his bill, like a person grinding his teeth. I do not know what causes this, but always consider it an ominous symptom.

They are fed on canary seed and white and spray millet, and have coarse river sand and cuttle-fish bone. I gave them bay salt yesterday, and the hen ate a little; but I have not seen the cock touch it. They are in a room without a fire, but with an even temperature of about 54 or 55 degrees. I may mention that I got a Long-tailed Grassfinch hen at the same time and she remains perfectly well.



A month ago I purchased a pair of Gouldians for a friend, and the cock of that pair, tho' in good plumage, is not at all well—sits huddled up and breathing heavily. *They won't touch Setaria glauca or green food.*

MABEL, M. TATE.

---

*The following reply was sent to Miss Tate.*

Unseasoned Gouldian Finches are often very weak and out of health, and are quite unfit to rough it with Parson Finches and other robust birds. They require care, and should be treated as invalids for a time. They are susceptible to cold, and require more warmth than you have been giving your birds.

Moreover, birds in the hands of dealers are usually fed very plainly, and rarely are supplied with anything in the form of grit. When suddenly launched into the midst of plenty, they sometimes eat a great deal more than they are in a condition to digest, and sometimes even will kill themselves with grit and surfeit.

I should feel inclined to give them a little fluid magnesia and fluid extract of taraxacum in their drinking water; and you might try a little glycerine.

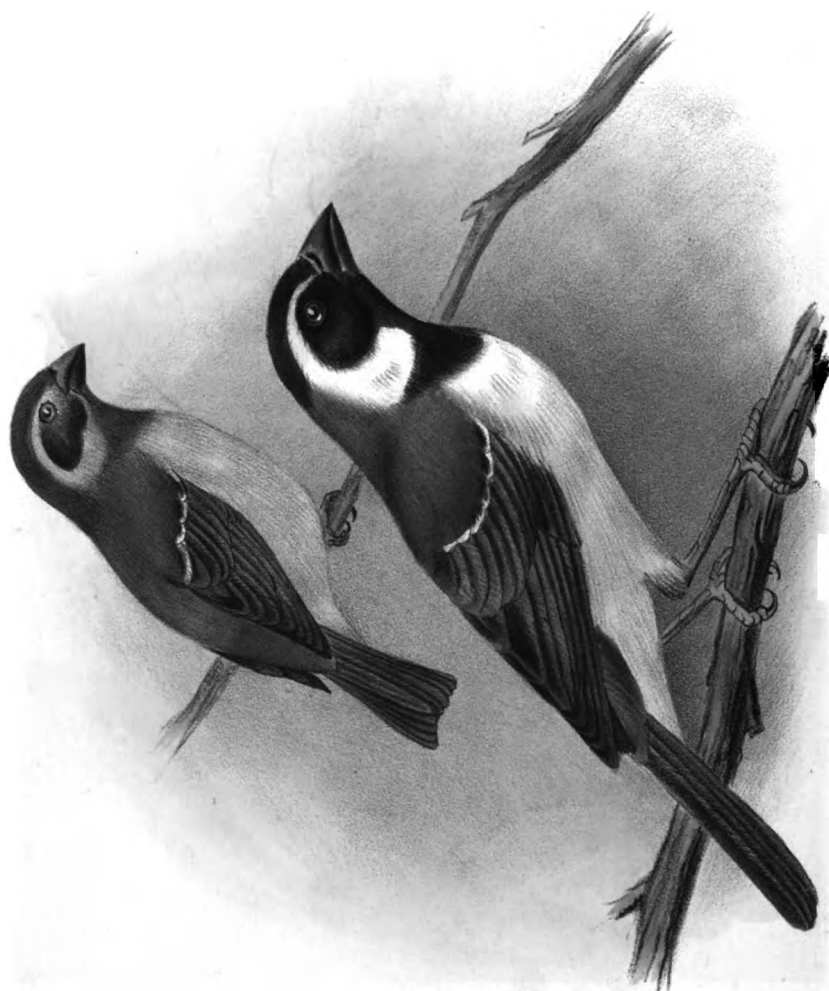
May I suggest that, for the present, you keep them warm, that you cover all but the front of their cage with green baize or something of the kind (and do not place them in a draught or too near the window), and that you feed them plainly; and do not give them green food.

I should give rock salt in preference to bay salt.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

---





CAPE SPARROW.  
*Passer arcuatus.*

Mintern Bros. lith.

D. Seth-Smith del.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**

BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 9.

*All rights reserved.*

JULY, 1901.

---

**THE CAPE SPARROW.**

*Passer arcuatus.*

By D. SETH-SMITH, M.B.O.U.

The Cape, or Crescent Sparrow inhabits, as the British Museum Catalogue tells us, "South Africa, eastwards to the Transvaal and westwards to Benguela." In its habits it seems to correspond very closely with our too familiar *P. domesticus*, making a large untidy nest either in a tree or under the eaves of a house, and generally frequenting the abodes of man. Andersson, quoted in Layard and Sharpe's Birds of South Africa, states: "This Sparrow is very abundant all over Damara and Great Namaqua Land, and extends as far south as the Cape, where, however, it seems a trifle larger than in Damara Land; it takes up its abode near to man, and in all its habits exactly resembles the House Sparrow of Europe."

The late Dr. Stark, however, in his recently-published work on the Birds of South Africa, referring to this species, remarks, "This Sparrow is still to be found living a perfectly wild life, at a great distance from human habitations, in many parts of Little Namaqualand and the Great Karroo desert. . . . It seems probable that this Sparrow was originally a desert bird, and has comparatively recently changed its habits in certain districts, and adapted itself to a town or village life."

Mr. A. C. Haagner writes thus in the "Ibis," for Jan., 1901, on Birds nesting in the Transvaal, "I also found several nests of the common Sparrow of this district (*Passer arcuatus*). The eggs of these birds are subject to an enormous amount of variation. I have taken eggs almost black in colour, owing to the profusion and darkness of the blotches, and others from the same nest almost white, the blotches being very light in colour and sparsely distributed. I also found in one of their nests an unknown egg, presumably that of a Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx cupreus*) which is known locally as the "Diederick." The egg was smaller

than that of the real owner of the nest, and of a dirty white, blotched in the form of a ring round the obtuse end with purplish and greyish brown. These Cuckoos are known to generally deposit their eggs in the nests of *Passer arcuatus*."

I obtained a pair of this handsome Sparrow in the Autumn of last year (1900); they were excessively wild at first and always tried to hide away in any corner they could find, and I experienced considerable difficulty in inducing them to show themselves sufficiently to enable me to sketch them, as they would crouch in the corner of their cage, usually one on the top of the other, and nothing would induce them to stand on their perch in a natural position.

Early in April I transferred them to a wire enclosure some twenty feet long by twelve feet wide, planted with a few shrubs, and containing a fair amount of shelter. In this they banged about a good deal at first, but soon appeared to get used to their surroundings, and quite content with their lot in life; in fact, so reconciled did they become that within a month they were seriously contemplating nesting in earnest.

There was a wooden box about nine inches square with a hole in the front, hanging to the wall, sheltered from the weather by some galvanized iron sheets above, but in no way hidden from view. In this a nest was built, composed of sticks, straw, and other rubbish, a cup-shaped depression being formed at the farther end, which was lined with feathers. I had noticed that a quantity of material had been taken into the box, but the birds were so shy, and appeared so absolutely unconcerned, and as if nothing was farther from their thoughts than serious breeding, that I thought probably this was merely a comfortable nest for them to sleep in. I am generally absent from home all day, and can only visit the aviary in the early morning and evening; at such times both sparrows would invariably be as far from the nest as possible, and I little expected that it contained any eggs. My suspicions were however aroused on May 19th, when, having a free afternoon, I hid myself in a corner of the aviary and watched its inmates. The Sparrows, I at once noticed, were unusually active in hunting apparently for live insects. They would occasionally visit the soft food dish and pick out the ants' cocoons, then away to the nest one of them would fly, soon to return for another dainty morsel, when the other would fly off to the nest. The fact was now perfectly clear that the nest contained—not eggs—but young birds. I could see that the food supplied did not quite satisfy the pair; they would scatter their

soft food mixture about a good deal as though something were lacking in it, and I knew that if the young were to be reared I must lose no time in supplying insects in some form or other. Here a difficulty arose, for the only creatures obtainable were mealworms, and now and then a few cockroaches, and these were greedily sought after by many of the other inmates of the aviary, and a handful of the former would be gone in no time. However, all went well until the 30th May, when a half-fledged youngster was discovered dead on the ground below the nest box, and the parents were seen to be building another nest. The nest was examined and two more young birds were found, both dead. I suppose the cause of failure was our inability to supply a sufficient quantity of insects, and I don't think mealworms are very suitable, but we did our best, and hope for better luck next time.

Although a strongly built and powerful bird, apparently the exact counterpart of *P. domesticus*, I have not found the Cape Sparrow a dangerous companion for the smallest of the ornamental finches, several of which share the same enclosure. Sparrows are not, however, as a rule, safe companions for birds less in size than themselves. I have known the small *P. luteus* do considerable execution in an aviary of small finches; so, perhaps, my Cape Sparrows may be an exceptionally meek and mild pair.

This is rather a silent Sparrow. I have never heard it utter the continuous chirruping so often indulged in by *P. domesticus*; many of its other notes are, however, identical with those of that species, especially its harsh warning note. It utters also sounds closely resembling the notes of a Budgerigar.

---

## NOTES FROM THE ZOO.

By WESLEY T. PAGE, F.Z.S.

While passing through the Parrot House at the Zoo, on June 1st last, I noticed a Pied Grey Waxbill: it was the first time I had come across anything of the kind, though melanism is quite common with the Avadavat, so I took particular notice of it and drew the attention of the keeper to it, and I understood him to say that it came into their possession in February last, when it was of the normal colour, and he had not observed the change. I carefully observed the bird, and, while it was fully adult, I should not say it was an aged specimen. I made the following notes: Flights and larger

wing-coverts, mostly white; tail-feathers, tipped with white; top of head, splashed with white; throat, very light, almost white. This variation (for it seemed more or less merged into the plumage generally) imparted to it a somewhat silvery appearance. I shall certainly note it particularly during my fortnightly visits there, while the summery weather lasts.

I also noted four very handsome birds there, which have been presented to the Society by our member, Mr. E. W. Harper, F.Z.S., viz., Great Barbet, Indian Green Barbet, Silver-eared Mesia, and Blue-winged Siva. All of them were new to me, and of the four named, I do not retain a very clear recollection of the Great Barbet, save that it was more soberly clad than its compatriot, the Indian Green Barbet; but it was a bold handsome bird, of large build yet elegant form, having large and beautiful dark eyes.

The Indian Green Barbet was clad in several shades of rich mossy green, and was also of large build, elegant form and bold demeanour, large dark lustrous eyes. It is about two inches longer than our Blackbird, and stouter, yet quite as active in its movements, which are similar. It was hopping from perch to perch, unmoved and unscared by the many visitors who braved the screeching Parrots on the occasion of my visit. It would be a handsome and most desirable addition to the bird-room.

The Blue-winged Siva (*Siva cyanuroptera*). This bird is exquisitely beautiful, about the size of our Chaffinch though not quite so thick in body, seems to be as pert and active in its movements, while lacking the wildness of *Fringilla*. Its plumage is light brown above, greyish white below, top of head blue with dark lines, the flights and tail are rich cobalt tipped with white; it has brown eyes, flesh-coloured feet; the upper mandible is blackish and the lower yellow. The colours are so beautifully harmonised, with an entire absence of harshness—in fact I consider it more beautiful than even the Violet-eared Waxbill.

Silver-eared Mesia (*Mesia argenteauris*). This bird reminds one at once of the Yellow-bellied Liothrix (*Liothrix luteus*) though it is a little longer, and lacks the forked tail of the Liothrix. The plumage is also similar, perhaps a little coarser; the reds and yellows are more showy, it has a black cap and lovely silvery-grey ear-coverts; this beautiful tint also extends somewhat over the cheeks: (hence its name, Silver-eared Mesia, is at once appropriate and descriptive); eyes dark brown, bill and feet yellow.

As far as I could judge, it resembled *Liothrix luteus* in its movements, in fact, many who had only a passing knowledge of the Pekin Robin might easily mistake it for that bird. But an aviculturist will at once note its more graceful appearance, and also its more showy plumage and beautiful ear-coverts and cheeks.

The above descriptions are utterly inadequate to do justice to these handsome birds, and I certainly hope either Mr. Harper or Mr. Finn will follow these rough notes with a full description of their wild life, and also their demeanour in captivity.

From what I saw at the Zoo they would evidently thrive on fruit, usual soft-food mixture, with a few mealworms, gentles, etc. All four were males.

---

## ON CERTAIN SERIN-FINCHES.

By A. G. BUTLER, Ph.D.

One of our members lamented lately that the Magazine was too much given up to the larger birds—the Parrots, Ducks, Cranes and other coarsely built members of the feathered family, whilst the Serins and other more general favourites were being shelved. Although I cannot say that the above-mentioned larger birds were ever special favourites with me, I must admit that I was pleased to see the pages of the Magazine devoted to Aviculture as a whole, rather than restricted in its scope.

When one comes to think of it, there is not very much new to be learned about the more ordinarily imported Finches; there is a sameness about their mode of nidification throughout whole families which precludes one from anticipating anything very startling even when one breeds a species for the first time. It is true that the discovery of metallic warts on the edges of the gape in the young of some *Ploceid* Finches was a little surprising when first observed; it is also perhaps interesting to note how Finches which, in a wild state, prefer to build an open nest in a bush, will, in captivity, select a Hartz travelling-cage in preference; but you do not find one species (as in the Ducks) depositing its eggs in marshy ground in a well-formed and well-lined nest and another placing its eggs high up in a hole in a tree: you do not find one species, as in the Parrots, building a huge nest of twigs, and another laying its eggs in a hole with no nest whatever.

Well, all this does not tell the readers of the Magazine much about Serin-finches; so I must proceed to give the best



account I can of the few species which have at various times come into my hands, and if some of our other members will supplement my notes by giving an account of species which they have had, we shall doubtless acquire some useful information from one another.

Of all the imported Serins I consider the Grey Singing-finch (*Serinus leucopygius*) to be, by far, the most attractive: it makes no pretence at showy plumage, being a veritable little Quaker, but its song is, in my opinion, sweeter than that of any other Finch.

I should not like to say how many specimens of Grey Singing-finches I have kept, because I invariably purchase all that are offered to me, yet I have never succeeded in breeding the species nor am I absolutely certain how to distinguish the sexes.

The late Mr. Abrahams, who certainly was very clever in picking out sexes of Grey Singing-finches, assured me that the cock bird always showed a whiter spot on the centre of the throat especially when singing. I used to sit and watch for that spot just as a man wearied with insomnia watches for the morning; but I must confess I never caught a glimpse of it; I believe, however, that it is possible to pick out the hens by their slightly browner tint and more strongly streaked flanks. I have found the average of imported specimens to be about two hens to every cock bird; but as the hens almost invariably die from egg-binding, it is as well that one should secure a majority of the weaker sex if ambitious to breed this Serin.

When I wrote the article on this bird in my "Foreign Finches in Captivity." I suggested that it was a good plan to keep several cocks together in the same aviary; since the more these birds fought, the more they sang: this is quite true; but I have since discovered that an isolated male in a flight cage eighteen inches in cubic measure, sings every fine day throughout the year excepting when moulting. My pet songster was paired with a small German hen Canary for two years; she hatched and partly reared one mule; and then, with its flight and tail feathers half-grown, the stupid little thing unaccountably died: in the following summer its mother followed its bad example, since which time I have kept the father alone, but he seems remarkably happy.

Dr. Russ compares the song with that of the Woodlark and Canary, but it neither has the varied bell-like trills of the former, nor the irritating shrill thrice repeated whistle which

mars the song of the latter bird: it is really much more like a sweet Skylark's song, rather more varied and without the long dropping notes which the Skylark utters as he returns to earth. The habit of this little Serin of turning his head from side to side all the time that he is singing appears to have a somewhat modulating effect upon the notes.

The St. Helena Seed-eater (*Serinus flaviventris*) is perhaps the handsomest of the imported species; and, in my experience, is the longest-lived; I purchased a pair from Mr. Abrahams in 1887, the hen of which died, I think, in 1891, but the cock remained in fairly good health and sang until 1900, dying on December 16th.

The song of this Serin is very like that of the Grey Singing-finch, but is much louder and more rarely heard; indeed I do not think I ever heard my cock bird sing excepting in the summer months, and then only perhaps two or three times a day unless he chanced to be trying to charm a hen Green Singing-finch. I have recorded my failure to cross it with Canary hens, chiefly owing to its extremely quarrelsome disposition: indeed, as it is the handsomest, so is it the most combative of all the Serins which I have kept.

The Green Singing-finch (*Serinus icterus*) is almost like a small edition of the preceding, but with a very inferior though even louder song; both sexes sing at times, and the performance, though scrappy and consisting of short joyous shouts of song rather than a connected melody, must be extremely pleasing when a flock of this species can be heard in a state of freedom.

This bird is almost as quarrelsome and occasionally more malicious in its combats than the St. Helena Seed-eater: it is moreover undoubtedly a mischievous egg-eater. There is not the least difficulty in getting the Green Singing-finch to pair and build in an aviary; the hen lays her clutch of white eggs and then they gradually all disappear: this has happened with my birds on five occasions, and the presence of a pair of these birds in an aviary with birds smaller than themselves seems at once to put a stop to all breeding in that aviary, all the eggs disappearing mysteriously.

With regard to the distinction which Mr. Abrahams used to make between individuals of the Green Singing-finch, it is worthy of note that the British Museum Catalogue does not acknowledge them. I believe myself that my friend Mr. Abrahams distinguished the older birds, in which the face markings were blacker, under the name of the Bearded Seed-eater,

and called the younger birds and the middle-aged hens the Green Singing-finch. I know that if you purchased a bird with well-developed marking on the face and another with the face markings weakly indicated you were almost certain to find that you had secured a pair.

I cannot say I like the Green Singing-finch. I object to mischievous and to spiteful birds, and I have known one Green Singing-finch to kill smaller birds than itself. I suppose I have had, altogether, some four or five pairs, but I shall not buy any more: the species is fairly long-lived, and I still have a hen which I must have purchased some five or six years ago at least.

The Sulphur Seed-eater (*Serinus sulphuratus*) is one of the largest of the Serins, and has a beak shaped like a Grosbeak: he is an ugly, powerful-looking bird, almost giving one the idea of a disreputable hen Greenfinch, only he is not half so handsome.

The late Mr. Abrahams gave me a cock of this somewhat rarely imported bird in November, 1899, and I paired it with a Norwich Canary, which treated it with contempt. It sang a few notes, but not worthy to be called a song. Subsequently I turned it out into an aviary with many other birds, and discovered that this bird, for all his aggressive aspect and powerful beak, was innocent as a sucking-dove, and that his vaunted song was a fraud: he died early in the present year.

It is easy for me now to comprehend why a bird, common in S. Africa, as the Sulphur Seed-eater is, should not be freely imported: the aviculturist generally expects to get either beauty or song for his money; if neither is forthcoming, a bird does not catch on.

Another ugly bird, far more so than the preceding, is the White-throated Seed-eater (*Serinus albigularis*) of which I once possessed a specimen: it looked as if it could bite the head off any bird its own size which offended it, but it was a most mild-tempered creature; and although reputed to be a fine singer, never uttered a note to the day of its death.

The Cape Canary (*Serinus canicollis*) or Grey-necked Serin is another bird for the possession of which I was indebted to the liberality of my late friend, who sent me a rather aged specimen in order that I might hear the song. Dr. Russ speaks of the song as Lark-like; I found it rather monotonous, of the nature of that of the Hartz-mountain Roller, but far shorter and less varied; indeed I considered it a poor performance. This species is easily crossed with the common Canary.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

NESTING OF A HEN NONPAREIL, AND CHANGE OF  
PLUMAGE IN COCKS.

I venture to relate the story of a widowed Nonpareil, which nested in one of my aviaries last year, and which, but for a torrential storm of rain, would, in all probability, have succeeded in rearing a young one. It is not easy to procure hen Nonpareils; but in 1897 I succeeded in purchasing a nice pair. The cock subsequently died, but in time I got a new husband for the widowed hen. Last year I turned them out into a nice umbrageous aviary. On June 30th I ran into the aviary to look to some young Passerine Doves, whose parents had according to their custom begun to neglect them. As I went hurriedly out I had a vague suspicion that a bird flew out of the door over my head. It was too well founded, the cock Nonpareil had escaped. I was going out and could not stay to watch him. In the evening I found him making frantic efforts to get through the wire to his mate, but he never came near the door. He slept on a Scotch fir tree, and next morning renewed his efforts to get in. Then he went off, and was only once seen again, about a week afterwards, in my coachman's garden, a quarter of a mile from the aviary. On the 9th of July, to my great surprise, I found the little widow sitting on three eggs in a neat little nest which she had built in a China rose bush. Of course, at first I had but faint hopes of her persevering in her solitary task, but on referring to Mr. Farrar's account of the nesting of his Nonpareils, I took heart when I read that the hen did most of the feeding. She sat indefatigably, and in due time hatched one very strong young one, and then a weaker one, which died in a few days. The third egg was unfertile. She continued most assiduous in her care of the surviving youngster. When I came round with mealworms, she generally flew to the wire to meet me, but at times I was obliged to push her off the nest to induce her to feed. Things went on well for twelve days; the young bird grew and feathered fast; but then came a terrible night of thunder and torrential rain. The nest was somewhat exposed; the next morning the hen looked drenched and wretched, and seemed inattentive to the nestling. The nest was wet and the inmate miserable. When the mother at last took it a bit of a mealworm it was listless and indifferent, and in 24 hours it was dead.

I think it worth while relating this story, for, had it not been for this violent storm, the solitary hen would in all probability have reared her offspring unaided. Should any of our members have an accident like my own (and I know of no birds so clever at escaping as Nonpareils) it would be well at least to give a hen Nonpareil the chance of nesting. I am just now turning out the same hen with a handsome new mate, into the same aviary, in which the foundation of her last year's nest still remains.

While writing of Nonpareils I cannot help referring to the question, which has been raised in the pages of the Magazine, as to whether male birds have or have not both summer and winter garbs. On page 166 of Vol. V., I read that Mr. Farrar's undoubtedly have changed colour. He wrote, "In the winter the cock is quite a sober looking gentleman, and only gets his splendid livery as summer draws on." In a note, however, to this Dr. Butler wrote, "I have had a good many of these birds, but my males never put on a different plumage for the winter." My own experience, in

the cases of the three cocks which I have had to live any length of time, has not been quite the same as that of either Mr. Farrar or Dr. Butler. They have become "sober looking" after the moult; the bright blue head has turned to bluish grey, the scarlet breast to lemon colour, but unfortunately as summer has advanced they have entirely failed to resume their "splendid livery." Mr. Frostick, some time ago, warned me that they *must* be "colour-fed" during the moult, if they are to keep their bright hues in this climate.

O. E. CRESSWELL.

### NOTICE.

MR. PAGE wishes it to be understood that, in his note on page 161, all he meant to ask for was the *body* of any specimens that members did not require for themselves.

### BIRDS IN JAMAICA.

SIR,—Will somebody tell me what birds are indigenous to Jamaica, and worth buying there, if any?

I am probably going there (to Kingston) for a flying visit this summer, most likely in July or early August, and if there is anything worth getting, could bring it back with me. I suppose there is no difficulty in shipping? We should go from Bristol, by Elder Dempster line.

M. S. WILLIAMS (Mrs. LESLIE WILLIAMS).

### ILLIGER'S MACAW, ETC.

SIR,—Would you be so kind as to tell me if "The Macaw Parrakeet" is the same as Illiger's Macaw? I have a fine pair of what I believed to be the latter, but having no room for them sold them to a dealer. I was much surprised to receive them back again, as he said they were not Illiger's Macaws but Macaw Parrakeets. The latter I never heard of. They are *exactly* like the picture of Illiger's Macaw in Greene's "Parrots in Captivity;" I can see no difference anywhere.

Also would you tell me if the Leadbeater's Cockatoo and Rock Pepler Parrakeet have been bred in captivity. In Dr. Greene's book no case is mentioned in either instance; but it is some time since the book was edited.

M. A. JOHNSTONE.

*The following reply was sent to Mrs. Johnstone:*

All the Macaws are Parrakeets. There are about twenty known species of Macaws; it follows, therefore, that there are some twenty different species of "Macaw Parrakeets." The name "Macaw Parrakeet" is therefore vague and meaningless.

The following is the description of Illiger's Macaw (*Ara maracana*) as given in the Museum Catalogue of Birds:—

*Adult.* Green, rump and upper tail-coverts with an olive tinge; forehead rose-red; head, nape, and cheeks greenish blue, darker on the crown; a patch on the lower back and another on the middle of the abdomen pale

scarlet; quills and primary-coverts blue; secondaries and outermost greater upper wing-coverts blue, tinged with green on the outer webs; carpal edge bluish green; under wing-coverts olive green; tail blue, with the base of the feathers, especially of the central ones, tinged with reddish brown; quills and tail-feathers underneath golden olive, becoming dusky towards the tips; bill horny black; feet brown flesh-colour; naked cheeks yellowish flesh-colour; iris brown-red. Total length 16·7 inches, wing 8·5, tail 9·1, bill 1·4, tarsus 0·6.

*Female.* Like the male, only the red on the forehead less extended.

*Young.* Red colour on the forehead less extended and paler; the patches on the lower back and middle of the abdomen yellowish, and the upper parts spotted with pale grey-brown.

*Hab.* Brazil and Paraguay.

I am not aware that either Leadbeater's Cockatoo or the Rock Pepler has been bred in this country.

There are a few instances known of the former having laid eggs.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

[NOTE.—Since the foregoing was written, I have noticed that the Rock Pepler has also laid eggs and sat; but I cannot trace that young have ever been reared in this country.—R. P.]

#### IDENTIFICATION OF BIRD—INDIAN FINCHES.

SIR,—Would you kindly identify the dead bird herewith, also the following.

Same shape as a Linnet but rather longer; head, throat, and nape bright chestnut-brown; wings light grey barred with bright saffron-yellow, back and underparts bright yellow; feet flesh-colour, and bill light grey. The female has no brown, and the underparts are yellowish white, very pale. The build and general form is the same as the dead bird, but longer and more powerful.

Both kinds sing well, and were bought in Calcutta.

I have at last been able to get one Purple Sun-bird home (out of 12) and I suppose it is the only one alive in England. H. C. HESLTON.

*The following reply was sent to Mr. Heslton :*

Although the bird you sent to me was in very poor condition, I have no doubt that it was a young male of the Crimson Rose-finch (*Carpodacus erythrinus*) not quite in adult colouring.

The other bird, which you describe, is doubtless *Emberiza luteola*, which Jerdon calls the Red-headed Bunting.

I have kept the former, but not the latter species. A. G. BUTLER.

#### MICE AND STRYCHNINE.

SIR,—In May last, at pp. 140-1, I referred to the partial failure of Battle's Vermin Killer to kill my mice. The acting agent in this poison is, I am told, strychnine.

In the *Zoologist* for June, which has just come to hand, at page 235,

amongst the Editorial Gleanings, some interesting particulars, taken from "Merck's Annual Report for 1900," are given of the occasional failure of strychnine to effectively dispose of dogs and other animals to which this poison had been administered. The few words which chiefly concern us run as follows:—"Complaints have, however, been made for a number of years to the effect that at times strychnine has shown itself ineffective, especially with large animals, which has induced the writer to enquire into the causes of this phenomenon. Strychnine and its salts—in particular its nitrate—which is commonly used for poisoning purposes, are, chemically, very stable compounds, and their toxic efficacy remains unchanged for years. Its occasional inefficiency can therefore have its cause exclusively in the mode of administration, the state of the body, especially the extent to which the stomach is charged, and the presence or absence of the tendency to vomit . . . It appears that strychnine nitrate may be administered internally to Dogs in the solid form without detriment to the degree and promptness of its action . . . whereas they recovered if the same dose was given in the form of a solution."

It will be seen, therefore, that my case was not unique, except in matters of detail.

Unfortunately the article does not give us any practical assistance in the disposing of our mice. While stating the exact amount of strychnine which must be administered in order to kill certain animals, from the lion and the bear to the fowl and the pigeon, the all important mouse has been omitted from the list, perhaps for the obvious reason that, if we can catch a mouse for the purpose of balling it with a definite weight of strychnine, we may possibly be able to dispense with the strychnine altogether.

Perhaps I should point out that Battle's Vermin Killer used to be effective here, but seemed steadily to lose its power over the mice. Assuming it to have been unadulterated and not too stale, there must have been some resisting or non-receptive condition in the mice themselves, increasing as the use of the poison was continued, that caused this gradual failure; and the latter seems to point, as I suggested, to a breed of mice having been raised here which, self-inoculated generation after generation, had become practically immune.

But I have got rid of the mice for the present. For several months I have been using fully a dozen common break-back traps baited with a good lump of cooked beef. The best meat is not necessary for this purpose; some of the less valuable parts will do, only let it be a good solid lump. The traps are hidden away behind boxes, furniture, etc., are scattered about all over the house, and are left untouched for two or three weeks, when they are re-baited. Of course they must not be placed where the birds can get at them. It is important that the traps should be regularly inspected, and all captures promptly removed.

For how long the mice have retired I do not know. In the meanwhile, I and my birds are happy.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**

BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 10.

*All rights reserved.*

AUGUST, 1901.

---

**NESTING OF DIUCA FINCHES.**

By ROSIE ALDERSON.

There is so little mention of the Diuca Finch in the past volumes of the Magazine that perhaps the following account may be of some interest to any member who may be thinking of adding these handsome birds to his or her collection.

I saw my first and only pair of Diuca Finches at the Crystal Palace Show, October, 1899. The price asked was 15/-, and I greatly admired the birds, but felt undecided whether to purchase them. Finally I wrote the same night to ask if they were still unsold; I found they were, and so became their owner. The Diucas arrived a day or two later, and appeared so healthy that I at once turned them loose in the aviary. And now before going any further I must describe their appearance. The general colour of the cock is blue-grey, with darker feathers (edged with chestnut brown) in the wings and tail. The throat is pure white, the grey meeting in a broad band across the chest; the breast, under parts, and under-tail feathers are also white, and a bright chestnut patch adorns each flank. The legs, feet, and beak are lead-coloured, the eyes black and bold, and edged with a very narrow line of white feathers. The hen is practically the same as the cock, but the grey is of a browner shade, and the white not so snowy. Both birds are about the same size, rather larger than a Java Sparrow, and have the power of raising the head feathers when excited like a crest, in a very becoming way.

I learnt from their former owner that they had been bred in Germany, but that the real habitat of the bird was Brazil. Each bird was marked with a little metal ring round one leg.

I have said I turned the Diucas loose in the aviary, but at once bitterly repented it. The newcomers quickly began to bully the smaller inmates, and the whole place was thrown into



a state of confusion. I began to think sorrowfully that I must part with my handsome birds, but the first encounter was reassuring. My little Pileated Finch, "Jan," a great favourite of mine, stood bravely up to the cock Diuca, raising his scarlet crest in great indignation, and to his shame the big bird beat a retreat.

I purchased the Diucas in October, and in December they began a nest of heather, but fortunately, as it was so late, it came to nothing. Another nest was started in March, this time a very pretty one, composed of fine shavings, but they again seemed to tire of it, and pulled it to pieces. Both birds were extremely fond of rape seedlings, and would nip off the heads as cleanly as if cut with a pair of scissors.

About this time I noticed one day an amusing incident, as illustrating what a coward the Diuca really was. I had had a Grey Cardinal given to me, brought by some friends of mine from Madeira. It was then, and always has been, the quietest of birds, and at present is constantly chased by a fiery little cock Combasou, but this by the way. On the introduction of the Cardinal into the aviary the cock Diuca—thinking to make a grand show off before the hen (I am certain it was for no other reason, for she watched the whole time), ran after the Cardinal, and pecked him *from behind*; the latter seemed perfectly unconscious, but finally turned round *accidentally*, when the Diuca at once fled. He tried to renew his attacks, but the Cardinal was quite indifferent to him, so he gave it up, evidently concluding that it is very poor fun bullying anyone who doesn't even notice you. Again the Diucas began a nest, this time in a cigar box, and progressed so far as to hatch a fine young one. They fed it on nothing but insects, and unfortunately my supply ran short, and to my great grief it died, and was thrown out of the nest. Had I had a sufficient supply of mealworms it would probably have lived, but I had then no idea that the young fed on *only* insect food, and my stock had got low. I gave them my last mealworm, and tried in vain to get more in time, but, though I had some ordered, the tradesman would not send them promptly, and despite his promise to despatch them on a certain day, (in reply to my urgent telegram) he failed me, and the poor little Diuca died of starvation. I tried to substitute woodlice, but the old birds, though they took them at first, soon tired of them. It was pitiful to see the anxiety of the parents, how they flew to me for mealworms every time I came into the aviary, when I had none to give them. I tried at the flour mills, but could hear of

none, and when those I had ordered at last came, of course it was too late.

I was very disappointed, for the dead young one was quite a large size and looked very healthy.

Early in June the Diucas tried again. This time I determined to do better, and wrote to their former owner to ask if he would mind giving me the address of the breeder of the birds. This he very kindly did, and I wrote at once to Germany. I got a most courteous answer, telling me that the old birds would feed the young on *nothing* but insects or mealworms, and that I was to remember as most important to leave some mealworms *overnight* for the birds to find first thing in the morning (a). This fourth nest the Diucas built in half a cigar box (placed lengthways on). The nest was very neat, made chiefly of hay, with a soft lining of feathers. One egg was thrown out, and also a newly-hatched young bird, after the hen had sat some time. A little later an older bird, with grey down on the head, was found dead on the floor, and I began to fear I was again to fail.

On the whole the hen sat well, but was rather restless sometimes. During this time the cock ceased his love song of six sharp notes, and became almost silent.

The remaining two eggs were hatched about June 20th, as far as I could tell. Both the parents fed the young on cut up mealworms, but the cock seemed to let the hen have the leading share in the operations, giving her the mealworms, and she in turn would give them to the young birds. The parents were absurdly jealous, and attacked every innocent bird that came near the nest. On July 7th was first heard the joyful sound of the young ones chirping, and three days later I got a glimpse of the open beaks of the two nestlings. They were very wide, with a thick wax skin round the mouth. The cock began now to attempt to sing his former song again. The elder young one emerged from the nest on July 12th. It was a very pretty looking little thing, decidedly perky in its appearance and movements. The tawny and white markings were less decided, otherwise it was much the same colour as the hen bird. It retired back to the nest at night, and the next day No. 2 came really out. I had previously seen it leave the nest for a moment and then go back. This nestling was younger, and not so strong as No 1. Its feet began to get very weak, and on Sunday, July

(a). I am also indebted to one of our Members who very kindly helped me in this difficulty.—R.A.

15th, it could no longer climb into the branches (the nest being very high up) but stayed on the floor. Its legs were so weak that they gave way on each side, and it appeared to balance itself on its tail. It was very pretty and downy, and seemed the mother's favourite. Gradually it got worse, losing first the use of one leg, and finally of both. I decided at last to chloroform it (for its case seemed hopeless, and the old birds began to neglect the poor little thing) but I was spared this, for it fell into the water fountain and was drowned.

I had tried to feed it myself, but found almost the only way I could get it to eat was to cut a mealworm behind the head, and, having thus killed it, to squeeze it against the beak, the little nestling seeming to enjoy it and sucking it in.

By July 17th the surviving young bird could fly, and was lusty and vigorous, and nearly half as large as an adult bird.

The parents again started to nest, and one day we noticed the cock behaving very strangely. He took a mealworm, and ran up to the hen (apparently with his usual intention of giving it to her) but suddenly ran back; this action he repeated four or five times, each time uttering a strange note; finally he gave the mealworm to the young one. The old birds' method of feeding the young was very curious. They would carry a mealworm up to the nestling, who cried and flapped its wings, and drop it into its open mouth, and then pull it out again, doing this about six times before it was arranged to their satisfaction and they would allow the young one to swallow it; perhaps they squeezed a little of the mealworm down the young one's throat each time, I cannot tell.

The giving of mealworms so many times in the day was very awkward, for so many other birds in the aviary were fond of them, and I had to guard the saucer until the *Diucas* had emptied it. So I determined to cage them, and managed it successfully, transferring both the old birds and the young one to a large cage five feet long. I also moved the nest (it was the same they had built in before, and was very clean inside, and contained one fresh egg) and put it in a fresh box, and hung it up in the cage. Two days later the family had quite settled down, and five eggs in all were laid and hatched, but for some unknown reason all the young ones were thrown out when only a few days old. It seemed a great pity, for they looked so strong and healthy. It was very amusing to see the cock go to tell the hen when I put any fresh mealworms into the cage. She would at once come off the nest, feed the young bird with a worm, and

then go back again. The young Diuca tried to feed itself on seed on August 2nd (the cock feeding it on seed as well) but it preferred being fed to feeding itself.

The eggs of the Diuca Finch are about the same size as those of the Robin: pale blue-green in colour, splashed all over with brown, not unlike a Rook's egg on a small scale.

In November my young Diuca died, after being ill a few days; it was a fine bird, and I think, from its colour, a hen. I also lost the cock last March, and have now only the hen left. She is in splendid health and plumage, and very anxious for a mate, and has built a nest among the fir branches.

The cock Diuca took a most violent dislike to a cock Nonpareil, after they had lived peaceably together for some time. I had to put each bird into a separate aviary; and, on bringing back the Nonpareil in a cage, the Diuca settled on it at once, and tried to get at his enemy through the wires. Except for this, I have never known the Diuca injure my other birds, though he used to chase and tease them. (b)

## THE BREEDING OF THE AMERICAN MOCKING BIRD.

(*Turdus polyglottus*).

By the Rev. C. D. FARRAR.

For four years I have been trying to breed the American Mocking-bird. Of course there will be failures. For three years I failed dismally. Successes, by which we proposed to make our rivals green with envy, do not come off. Birds on which we set our hopes go to the Crematorium, but still we are not disheartened. Hope springs eternal in the human breast; and so it did in mine.

For three years I tried valiantly to breed from two cocks. Perhaps my readers will smile: but it is not so easy to tell a hen Mocking-bird as some people imagine. I know what they say in books and Advice Columns in the papers; I, alas, followed these guides, only to meet with disappointment. For three years

(b). According to the Museum Catalogue, the Diuca Finch comes from Chili, not Brazil. Two young were bred in the London Zoological Gardens in 1887; it seems to me to be a free breeder. I have not found the male to be a coward, but abominably quarrelsome and vindictive, this summer, in the open aviary, hunting and even breaking a wing of so active and comparatively large a bird as the Red-whiskered Bulbul. I have at last been obliged to cut my bird's wings so short that he cannot fly at all; nevertheless he has as much assurance as ever, and, commencing before day-break, sings away all day as if nothing had happened and he were master of the whole aviary.—R.P.;

I had beautiful nests built, but no eggs were laid ; I blamed the 'cat' and all sorts of things, but never suspected the true cause, the gender of the birds. What at last undeceived me was a battle royal that I fortunately witnessed, in which one of the contending parties lost an eye. Then my mind was at rest. I knew why I had failed, and at once proceeded to look for the remedy. It was a case of '*cherchez la femme*' again : a very difficult task in this case. The only way that I could see was to get half-a-dozen Mocking-birds together and compare them, on the off-chance that there might be a hen among them. I sent to a friend, and he kindly allowed me a consignment to pick from. For long enough I looked at them, but for the life of me I could not pick out much difference. Some had more white on the wing ; some were lighter, some darker ; but I felt sure they were cocks by their build and carriage. At last I thought about Parrots : in some you can tell the sex by the eye. I looked over the Mocking-birds, and lo, two of a big cageful had *green* eyes, and all the rest gravel. "Eureka," I cried, "I have found out the secret." And so I had, for with the green eye there went a general look of femininity.

The best of the two hens I lost as nearly as a pop, as we say up here. I was ill in bed for a week, and the attendant who looked after the birds for me forgot to fill the water pot. I never saw a bird more nearly gone ; but by superhuman effort I managed to pull her round.

In the early spring, I liberated this hen with the one-eyed cock into a nice big aviary thickly planted—a regular Mocking-bird Paradise. Their companions were a pair of Bearded Tits, a pair of Red-eared Bulbuls, and a pair of Blackcaps, and two Chinese Quails. The Mockers, in spite of the bad character many give them, molested their neighbours in no wise ; but confined themselves to their own domestic affairs. For a few days the cock sang most magnificently, and no one who has not heard a Mocking-bird has any conception of his vocal powers. He can imitate any bird to the life. I have heard mine call like a hen Many-colour wanting to pair, and you would have sworn that the Many-colour was there. I have heard him scold like a Peggy Whitethroat to the life, squawk out like a Blackbird when frightened, sing like the Blackcap, and all in the most life-like manner.

After a few days given to song, he (the cock) settled down to business. The cock, in the case of Mocking-birds, does all the building ; the hen simply nods approval. The first

intimation of what was in progress was my seeing Master Mocking-bird carrying old sticks in his bill. He soon selected a site in an elder bush, and was busy as a bee over his task. The nest is a beautiful structure, very strongly woven, externally of sharp thorns and twigs, and warmly lined inside with the finest grasses, and in a beautiful cup-shaped hollow. I sent the nest, after the birds had flown, to Dr. Butler, as I thought he would like to see it for himself.

Three eggs were laid; they are very pale green in colour, spotted all over with little brown blotches. The hen did all the nesting, the cock feeding her attentively and signalling each time that the mealworms were given out, that she should come and get her share. This she never failed to do. At the end of eleven days—speaking at a rough guess—I went and had a look, as I thought I saw the birds carrying live bait about. Sure enough, there were two fine youngsters in the nest, very pink and very naked; but very plump and well looking. One unfertile egg remained. I did not like to take it out of the nest, for fear the birds might not like it; so I left it to take its chance, but as I expected, it got broken in the course of rearing. I found the hatched egg shells at the very farthest point of the aviary away from the nest. It is evidently instinct that tells the parents to remove these tell-tales as far away as possible. I sent these shells to Mr. Phillipps, knowing the interest he takes in all hatching operations. He will say if I have described them accurately. It was an early and late case of getting nourishment into these youngsters. I did not dare to enter the aviary, and had to content my soul with watching, like Moses' sister, "afar off," to see what would happen.

Things went on all right, as I could see the birds at regular intervals visit the nest with mealworms. They sort of threw themselves sideways on the nest, light as shadows, in spite of their size. All the time the young were in the nest the cock never sang a note. To-day (June 17) when the young quitted the nest, he opened out magnificently, proud, I suppose, of his success. If they thought anyone was watching them they made a loud sort of scolding noise.

The weather was not very propitious, all the time, for rearing. What Fox once called "that little shower," was often going on, to say nothing of several gales of wind.

It is not every one, may be, that acted like Solomon did when he showed the Queen of Sheba all his royal treasures. I often think it must have made Sheba look small when she got home.

Perhaps that is why I have written this paper. When I do any thing worth telling, be sure I always run a pen-and-ink race to tell you. I fancy that, as this article is read, there will be a rustling demonstration of surprise, such as you may have observed in a country congregation when they hear an allusion to their week-day offences from the pulpit! The only thing I regret in this narrative is that that *third* egg did not hatch. I'm a little like poor Mrs. Moss, in "The Mill on the Floss," who, although she had eight children, could never overcome her regret that the twins had not lived!

## A SUPPOSED NEW WHISTLING-BIRD.

(*Myiophoneus* . . . . . ?)

By REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

A few years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting a gentleman (with his wife) belonging to the Indian Forests' Department. They told us how, every year, at the proper season, the whole family and household went into camp for some weeks, and travelled about in the forests, shifting their camping-ground almost daily. During these annual expeditions, they were brought face to face with wild nature in manifold forms: and they couldn't speak too rapturously of some of the charms and wonders they met with. Marvellous to relate, I feel constrained to say, they were not aviculturists; nevertheless they had much to tell us of the birds and of their songs in an indefinite way; and they were unanimous on one point that of all others, and beyond all others, which sang the sweetest, the merriest, and most continuously during their forest wanderings, was the bird which was popularly known as Whistling Tom. They were unable to describe this bird to me; and for many a day I remained in doubt as to the species.

On 1st September, 1900, a bird of a species new to me came into my hands, which was named Bob; and I think it probable that Whistling Bob and Whistling Tom are near relations. Interesting as Whistling Tom may be, Whistling Bob is still more so, for not only is he interesting in himself, but he is specially interesting as apparently belonging to a hitherto undescribed species of the genus *Myiophoneus*.

Whistling Tom, if I am right in referring him to this genus, doubtless is either Temminck's or the Himalayan Whistling-bird (*Myiophoneus temmincki*), mentioned by Mr.

C. L. Harrison at page 19 of Vol. IV. of our Magazine, or Horsfield's Whistling-bird (*M. horsfieldi*), a species which has been represented at the London Zoological Gardens in by-gone days.

As soon as Bob (for the sake of convenience, I will call him by this handy name) reached this country, I was invited by a dealer to come and see a "blue bird from New Guinea." One of our members had inspected him on the previous day, and, made of sterner stuff, had returned home with his money in his pocket. I, of weaker mould, was tempted and fell, and left my money in the dealer's pocket—but then I had Bob!!!

The dealer's reiterated statements that he had been assured that Bob came from New Guinea, having been obtained at Townsville in Queensland (or Thursday Island), are important, as tending to confirm my opinion that it is a new species; for I understand that no species of the genus *Myiophoneus* has yet been found in that Island. I made what enquiries were possible in the circumstances, and found that he was brought to England in a Queensland steamer passing through Torres Straits, the actual importer being (1) a reliable man and (2) a good man. Some time later, thanks to Mr. Seth-Smith, it became pretty clear that Bob was brought over by Mr. Carrick of our Society. When Mr. Carrick is next in England, if this should meet his eye, perhaps he will be so kind as to inform us what he knows of the history of the bird, as a statement from him which would help us to fix the country of origin would be of the greatest value.

So far as our present knowledge extends, seeing that the genus has not been discovered in Australia, it is as likely that Bob should have come from New Guinea as elsewhere. Vol. VII. of the British Museum Catalogue of Birds was published in 1883. Thanks to the courtesy of Dr. Butler, I have been informed by the Museum authorities that two species of the genus *Myiophoneus* have been discovered since the Catalogue was published, viz., *M. borneensis* (*Ibis*, 1885, pp. 123, 124; see also *Ibis*, 1901, p. 131), and *M. tibetanus* (*Ibis*, 1886, p. 145). These make up the number of recognised species to thirteen; but my specimen does not agree with the published descriptions of any one of the thirteen.

New species are still being discovered from time to time; and a bird may well have escaped observation in such a country as New Guinea, especially such a one as Bob, who has no brilliant plumage nor loud note or cry to attract attention; and is of so artful and cunning a nature that, should an army of naturalists and collectors sweep New Guinea from end to end, it



would be unlikely that a single Whistling Bob would be detected, although dozens might be in hiding in the holes and hollows of the forest trees above their heads; for a Whistling Bob would be absolutely invisible; and no amount of noise and confusion below would cause it to move a muscle; only by the merest chance could such a bird be discovered. Any way, be this all as it may, Books do not speak about Bob, so here is Bob to speak for himself.

The general character of my bird's plumage and build is the same as that of the genus. To the scientist, therefore, the chief points of interest will be the points of difference. But I find that living specimens of this genus are very little known in this country; and since Bob's arrival I have not met with a single aviculturist who seemed to have any personal knowledge of the Whistling-birds, or Whistling-Thrushes as they seem generally to be called. I propose, therefore, in the present paper, even at the risk of wearying some of our readers, to enter somewhat fully, however unscientifically, into a description of Bob's plumage, nature, and character.

Bob's plumage is difficult to describe, and very disappointing when one wants to show him off to the best advantage. So much so is this the case that to the casual visitor, especially the lady visitor, I have ceased to take the trouble to point him out, as to do so is usually to invite a taste of mortification. On one occasion, my mortification was turned into a triumph. Bob had been for some time in the dining-room, where I keep a select few of the foreign birds during the winter months, and had become accustomed to human society. A young lady, who had ignored my reference to Bob's rarity, passed him by with lofty indifference, and was chattering away on the other side of the room. Suddenly she almost screamed out, "WHY, THAT BIRD'S BLUE; I THOUGHT HE WAS BLACK!" Bob, thinking he was unobserved, had just hopped forward to the front of his cage; and the lady's eye had chanced to catch a glimpse of the true colour of the external plumage.

Bob objects to being interviewed, and at the approach of a stranger quietly retires, and when driven out of his inner chamber just dashes forward for a moment and immediately disappears again. Moreover, the colour of the plumage differs according to the light and direction from which it is viewed; like the sea, too, it differs with the colour of the sky, on a dull day appearing dull black to the casual observer, the amount of scarcely concealed black amongst the feathers aiding greatly

to produce this effect. A larger part, the hidden part, of most of the feathers is black or dusky black, the apical third or thereabout of the body feathers being purplish blue, darkening to blue-black in places, with a glistening tip of silvery gray or very light blue. On each wing (tips of median coverts) there is a crescent of white spots. A black lore spot extends just above and behind the eye, these black feathers wanting the glistening tips; and the under side of the tail is black. Across the chest, along the sides, but not extending down the centre of the lower breast, and round over the lower back, forming almost a circle round the body, the feathers, or many of them, have concealed white centres; that is, a line or pointed slit of white, quite narrow in some but broader in others, especially on the sides and lower back, runs up or near the shaft almost from the base, but not so far as to become generally visible (c). On each flank there is a little tuft of soft downy feathers, white on the one web, and purplish blue or blue black on the other, the white predominating. There are also some remarkable silky feathers with the colours arranged nearly as last stated, but usually with an edging of purple to the white web: I think these must come from the sides, but am not sure of the exact position; I collected them during the moult. These feathers with white centres form an irregular series, and are quite a feature in the plumage of the bird. Commencing with those which have simply a white shaft, we have others in which the white spreads on each side of the shaft to the webbing, first in a lesser then in a greater degree; then there are a few with the white on only one side of the shaft. These latter lead on to an extravagant development of the white "centre," the one web being purplish blue, the other white with only a little edging of the blue; and from these we have the feathers with the outer web entirely white.

The bill is wholly black, rather long and slim, straight, compressed, not toothed, but with the upper mandible strongly hooked, and at the nostrils higher than it is broad. No rictal bristles to speak of. Nostrils rather forward, uncovered, slightly oval, open, and at the end of a groove. Inside of mouth bright yellow, inclining to orange; eyes hazel brown. Legs long, and, with the toes and claws, wholly black. Centre toe with its claw slightly longer than hind toe and claw, the two side toes being

---

(c). It would be more correct to say of many of these feathers that the black and the concealed white run up to the top of the shaft, and that, from the tip of the shaft, there springs a fan-shaped projection of purplish blue with a mesial tip of silvery gray or light blue.—R. P.

short, inner shortest. Toes stout, the claws being very stout and sickle-shaped. Tail unusually boat-shaped, but nearly square at the end; before the moult it was quite square. Before the moult, also, the head was very little spotted, the chin and throat hardly at all. Total length about  $10\frac{1}{4}$  inches, of which perhaps the tail was barely 4. The foregoing particulars are the result of three examinations made before the moult, and are as correct as I could obtain them; but to examine a living and valued bird is a very different matter from examining an inanimate skin.

On May 3, I transferred Bob from the house to the garden, and made a fourth examination, this time when the moult was nearly but not quite over, and the plumage a little deceptive. On that day, the feathers from the centre of the crown, running down the back of the neck and spreading out over the mantle, were deep black like the lores; and there was a little black on the chin and on the base of the forehead. Since, however, the black feathers from the crown to the mantle seem more or less to have developed the blue ends and glistening tips. The head and throat are now profusely tipped, as are practically the entire fore parts of the body, above and below, lores excepted, the external aspect of most of the bird being purplish blue, with the head neck back and breast smeared over with these shining tips, slanting from the bill tailwards. In some lights the appearance is as if the head, neck, mantle, and breast had been well rubbed down with grease. The frequent apparent changes are very aggravating, for to-day (June 28) the bird's breast looks as if it were black mottled with bright light-blue.

On the last examination, the feathers across the breast with concealed white centres were not, I think, so concentrated, but seemed more scattered, appearing on the lower breast; and the tail feathers above were more blue, having only a little edging of black along the inner webs. The under tail-coverts were bright purplish blue, and the under wing-coverts seemed to be mostly blue; but a few were white or tipped with white, forming a crescent. A line of lighter and brighter blue runs across the forehead, and the same along each side of the crown; and since the beginning of June a distinct patch of the same light blue has been visible on the lesser coverts. All the flights seemed to be dusky black, with the exposed parts of the outer webs purplish blue,—but perhaps not extending to the points of the wing, which look black. First primary  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches long, 4-6 longest; but I am not sure that all the flights were fully grown on May 3.

Before the moult, Bob had been netted and his wings cut, and he was cowed and allowed me to examine him pretty freely; but by May 3 he had ceased to fear me, and he seemed to think that I was going to cut his wings again, and when handled on that day fought like a demon; and it was impossible, without incurring a great risk of injuring him, to look at the feathers under my two hands, or to make any but the most hurried examination of the concealed markings.

As to the tail, on the first three examinations it consisted of but eleven feathers. These feathers were short and absurdly narrow. At first incessantly, and still occasionally when nervous, he springs open and shuts his tail-feathers like a fan; as my bird-woman said one day, "He's uncommon busy with his tail." With the narrow feathers, the effect was that, when open, they all were separated like the extended and parted fingers of the human hand, and the tail looked contemptible. I examined the feathers, and failed to detect any sign of fracture or exceptional abrasion, each feather being well rounded at the tip. After a while, a twelfth feather grew, an outside feather, much broader and about one quarter of an inch longer than every other feather. Then the eleven feathers were cast in moult, and, after a few days' delay, also the new No. 12. An entirely new tail now made its appearance, one inch or more longer than the former tail, each feather being about double the width of the first eleven. On May 3, the outer feather on each side was fully one inch shorter than the others. On June 28, I noticed that one (I cannot speak of the other) of these two feathers was still abnormally short; but doubtless this was nothing more than the result of some little mischief set up in connection with the irregular growth of the No. 12 feather of the first tail.

An interesting feature in the new tail was that, when the bird was handled on May 3, it was found that the shaft of every one of the twelve feathers extended distinctly and clearly beyond the webbing. The new tail, too, seems less square and rather inclined to be indented in the centre.

Keeping a bird in a cage by itself, as Bob was during the winter, has one advantage—the feathers cast in the moult can be collected and preserved. The bulk of Bob's old plumage has been preserved; and recently I have been looking over the feathers. None of the twelve tail feathers shews a distinct shaft spike; but it is possible that these may have been worn away, though hardly on the new No. 12. I found what I was not looking for, and had never noticed before, a few small feathers wholly brown

and others with brown bases. One curious feather was brown with a concealed centre of light yellow-brown. Two of the brown feathers seemed to belong to the innermost scapulars, and probably the others came from the same region.

Before the moult, Bob's little tail was conspicuously out of proportion to the size of the bird. I flattered myself that this short tail was a special provision of nature to enable him to squeeze into holes without detriment or inconvenience. The enlarged size of the new tail seemed to squash my little theory, but, on consideration, I do not know that it does. What are these produced shaft ends for? Surely not for ornament, but for some practical use. For the immature bird, the short tail will suffice; but the adult, with its family to provide for, would need greater powers of general movement, which the full tail would furnish; and may not the shaft ends have been provided as a protection for the longer feathers, to protect the ends from abrasion when in the tree hollows?

Bob's legs are long, and he holds his head high, and seems to be continually on the look out. For about three weeks he was loose in the aviary, and, during that time, would instantly disappear on the slightest sound. No hole or crevice seemed too small for him to creep into. And when in hiding the plumage seems to absorb every ray of light, leaving the bird almost invisible. When shut up in a four-foot cage in a corner of the rather dull-lighted birdroom, but directly facing the window, I found that I could rarely see him. On one occasion, I was so absolutely certain that he was not in the cage that I opened the large folding doors and thrust my head and shoulders in to examine and see where he had broken through, but he was on the top perch in a corner of the cage all the time. Later on I found that I could best discover him by looking along the lighter-coloured perch for the black toes. When in hiding, he will not move a muscle or a feather, so that one could open the door and attend to his cage as readily as if it had been empty. Bob is a leopard in bird's clothing. It seems to be the nature of the bird thus to lurk in holes and dark corners, not alone for the purpose of concealment from his foes, but also to lie in ambush for unsuspecting prey that may approach or be enticed within range of his spring. When hiding for concealment, the white flank tufts are covered; but, when lying in ambush, the white downy feathers are often visible in the form of a little fan, each tuft having the appearance of a moth with extended wings as when at rest on the inner side of a tree-hollow, the bird himself

being invisible ; and doubtless he thus lures insectivorous birds to their fate. It may be that these tufts are used also for courting purposes. The feathers of the hind neck he often raises like a mane.

Bob seems to be of arboreal habits, and keeps much to the perches, bounding about with great power and spring. He has a curious way, which I have not noticed quite the same in any other species, of "taking a header" when he wants to go down, which he does without a flutter or sound. The boat-shaped tail probably helps him to execute this movement, which I suspect enables him to catch unsuspecting prey below. When on the ground, where he seldom remains long, he will hop and take short runs, but never walk.

*(To be continued).*

## NESTING OF THE LEADBEATER COCKATOO.

By Mrs. JOHNSTONE.

It is with much pleasure that I send an account of the nesting of the Leadbeater Cockatoo, in my aviary this summer.

The old birds commenced hunting for a suitable nesting hole early in April. All the birds in this aviary had been out the entire winter.

In the aviary are two rotten trees, about eight feet high ; they are entirely rotten inside, and much exposed to wind and rain. The Cockatoos took a great fancy to one, and, knowing it was useless to allow them to nest in it as it was, I had it boarded up on the open side, leaving a sufficiently large hole for them to use, near the top, with a drop inside of about two feet. It made a most excellent nesting-place in their opinion, for they were in and out of the hole the day it was finished.

The other tree, treated in a similar way, was seized upon by a beautiful pair of Rock Pepler Parrakeets. I say "seized," as I never saw such keen competition amongst the various Parrakeets ; it was, apparently, perfection in their opinion.

I cannot say how many eggs the hen Leadbeater laid, but she sat very closely for over three weeks, and then one day I saw her off her nest, and, to my surprise, she did not return to it for some hours. On approaching the tree, I could hear the young birds moving about. They made a curious hissing noise, and were evidently quite conscious of the approach of danger. The cock bird spent all his time eating decayed wood from a neighbouring stump ; he fed the hen, who in her turn fed the

young ones. I should say the young Leadbeaters were brought up almost entirely on this diet.

One Friday, about three weeks after, I believe, they were hatched, a splendid young bird appeared, nearly as big as his parents, and a picture of beauty. On the following Sunday another emerged from the hole, and the following Tuesday yet another.

They were all perfectly fledged and looked rather like lovely pink Owls. I cannot say whether they are cocks or hens, as I cannot get near enough to see their eyes. They look just like the parent birds, only pinker, softer, and more babyish looking. The two old birds will not allow another bird to go near them.

As I write (July 2nd) they fly perfectly, but perching is still a difficulty. The parents fly anxiously after them and superintend every step in their education.

I must add that the Rock Pepler Parrakeet laid four eggs, about the same time as the Leadbeater, but finding they did not hatch I have taken them away.

I believe this is the first time the Leadbeater Cockatoo has bred, and the Rock Pepler Parrakeet laid, in this country (*d*).

## THE NESTING OF THE ANDAMAN STARLING.

By the Rev. C. D. FARRAR.

The higher up we get the more we are watched—the rooster on the church steeple is of more consequence (although he is tin) than the rooster in the barnyard. I feel rather like the church rooster at having to chronicle another success. All the same I cannot but feel that I deserve my triumph, for though Fortune sometimes shows us the way, it is energy that achieves success. Fortune never takes anybody by the hand, but she often allows them to take her by the hand; and opportunities are made quite as often as they happen.

I might begin this paper after the manner of Lord Macaulay, "Every schoolboy knows the position of the Andaman Islands." I frankly confess I was not in the position of that

(*d*). The Rock Pepler would seem to have laid on a previous occasion; see my note, p. 175. In "Notes on Cage Birds," a reprint from the *Bazaar*, in book form of Notes relating to Cage Birds, edited by Dr. Greene, at page 193, "M" says, "In my outdoor aviary I have a hen Rock Pepler now sitting on three eggs laid on the ground." Why the proprietor of the *Bazaar* would not permit (so I was informed) the dates and names of the writers of the "Notes" to appear, I do not know; if these had been supplied, the book would be treble its present value.—R.P.

omniscient young prig; as I had to ask where they were, like Rosa Dartle, "simply for the sake of information." I found on consulting a map that the Andaman Islands are in the Bay of Bengal, not far from the Nicobar group, whence, I suppose come the Nicobar Pigeons.

Andaman Starlings are, I believe, exceedingly rare. Beside my own pair, I have only seen one other; an aged cock in the possession of our member for York, Mr. W. E. Stevens. As, therefore, the majority of the Avicultural Society will be no wiser for the name, I will briefly describe the birds.

The Andaman Starling is a particularly graceful and natty bird with greenish black wings and tail, a brownish dash on the rump, a snowy waistcoat and head; yellow beak, blue at the base; yellow understandings, and 'pearl' eyes. It would be difficult to imagine a more striking bird, and visitors always admire them immensely. The hen may be distinguished from the cock by her slightly grayer back and more slender and feminine build. I know of no other distinction.

Andamans are very tame and friendly birds, and by no means afraid of us humans. Mine will come within a yard of me at any time, and give their peculiar call note.

I one day received a letter from a dealer offering me a pair of Andaman Starlings, and telling me to look alive if I wanted them. Members of the Society who know me in the past will have no difficulty in guessing my answer; and a few days later the Andamans were 'at home' at Micklefield Vicarage. For the time, as the weather was bad, I put them into an indoor aviary in the birdroom, and they soon made themselves happy. They have two great weaknesses—tubbing and cockroaches. They are always ready to apply water to their outer man and black clocks to their inner. Fortunately I can gratify the latter craving, as our kitchen fairly lifts with cockroaches.

We find them here, we find them there,  
We find these beetles everywhere.

to parody an obituary notice often appearing in the "Yorkshire Post."

With the advent of warmer weather I enlarged the Andamans into a big garden aviary, in company with a pair of Turquoisines. In the inner aviary there were three logs intended for Parrakeet breeding. No. 1 was taken possession of by the Turquoisines, No. 2 by the Andamans, as also No. 3 at a later period. That my readers may understand the situation fully, I may say in passing that the neighbours on one side were



a pair of Pagoda Mynahs, and the other a pair of American Mocking-birds. All these have raised families, so you may guess I have had my hands full.

As the summer drew on, the Andamans soon showed that they intended to increase and multiply, and replenish the earth.

I one morning saw one of them carrying a straw into the central log; so I took the hint and supplied some nice likely nesting material. They soon took the hint, and from time to time I saw an oddment of straw sticking out of the hole, so that I knew that things were going merrily as the proverbial marriage bell. If I showed any undue interest by looking at the log from a distance, a warning note was soon uttered, which sounded very like that 'wicked little cuss word' Frenchmen are so fond of—*sacré*—very much drawn out. The hen only did the sitting, and, as far as I could tell, she sat about thirteen days. No doubt readers of an enquiring turn of mind will want to know what the pretty eggs were like. I regret that I can furnish no information on this point, as I knew that to look would be as much as the nest was worth; and later, as events proved, the colour of the eggs was put beyond my power to guess, as they all hatched. If, as is the usual custom, the egg shells were carried out, I never had the luck to find them, as no doubt they were dropped in the long coarse grass, and so escaped my notice (e). The youngsters were fed assiduously by both parents, they rose early and late took rest; but they did not carry out the Davidic maxim, by "eating the bread of carefulness," for they evidently believed that the good of all the land of Egypt was theirs. The way mealworms disappeared was a caution to rattlesnakes!

Guide books tell us that mealworms are too 'stimulating,' that if so fed, sooner or later the unnatural parents throw their unhappy offspring out of the nest and begin nesting again. I often think of those words of Mrs. Glegg in "The Mill on the Floss." "Mr. Tulliver doesn't want to hear your opinion or mine neither. There's folks in this world as know better than everybody else." That is my candid opinion of the advocates of non-mealworm treatment. I have had a fairly large experience and no mean measure of success, and I say without hesitation that I owe it all to disregarding such advice and following the teaching of Nature.

---

(e). Since the above was written the Andamans have gone to nest again. I have examined the eggs. They are deepish blue in colour, long and oval in shape.—C. D. F.

At first the Andamans went about their domestic duties with a beautiful disregard to privacy ; but as the days went on and the young began to lift up their voices, the parents grew worried and anxious, and if I happened to enter at feeding-time, I could hear them say 'shush' as plainly as we should say it ourselves if we wanted a youngster to be quiet. The cock was often called to order for being, I take it, too venturesome ; and I notice to this day that, when engaged in domestic duties, 'he treads delicately,' like Agag.

Feeding commenced pretty early in the morning, so I always left a good supply of grub over night. Hour after hour throughout the day provender was carried to those hungry little mouths that were always, like Oliver Twist, 'asking for more.'

All the time I was in blank ignorance as to the number of my new family. I ventured to think there might be two, but it was only a blind guess. All I knew was that, if these birds were to be reared—whether many or few—they must have all they asked for. I may here note, in passing, that the excreta, after the first few days, were carried out to the very end of the aviary and deposited on the woodwork ; and it was by looking at their size that I daily learnt how affairs were going on within that log of mystery. For the first few days the excreta were swallowed by the parents.

On Saturday, July 1st, No. 1 youngster made its appearance fully fledged. Three others followed on Sunday : or rather, to be correct, two flew out, and one popped its head out of the log ; so now I knew that my patience had been rewarded and that I was the proud and happy possessor of four young Andaman Starlings.

The youngsters have the black on their wings beautifully *laced* with white, their waistcoats are snowy, their tails greyish, their beaks pinkish, as also their legs ; and their eyes are the same as their parents. They have a *grey mark* down the back of the head, where the parents are white.

It is such a pretty sight to see the old birds feeding. The youngsters sit on the ground or on a branch, and as they open their beaks with a little shudder of pleasure, the old one runs at them and pops not one but half-a-dozen mealworms into its mouth. You wonder where they have all gone to. Feeding begins at daybreak and ends about 6.30, when no doubt the parents have had enough of it.

As I stand and look at these four youngsters my feelings are of the kind known as 'indescribable;' for human happiness consists in having what you want, and wanting what you have; and I believe firmly with the immortal Josh Billings 'that it is a darned sight easier tew find six men who ken tell exactly how a thing ought tew be did than tew find one who can do it.'

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### LONGEVITY OF GREY PARROTS.

SIR,—I have just come across a "Penny Magazine" for 1834, and extracted from a letter therein as follows:

"The Grey Parrot, like many others of its tribe, often lives to a great age, and we are told of individuals attaining to 50 or 60 years, or over 100 years. According to Le Valliant, one which lived in the family of Mr. Meninck Huysir, at Amsterdam, for 32 years, had previously passed 41 with that gentleman's uncle, who bequeathed it to his nephew. . . . When Le Valliant saw it, the bird was in a state of decrepitude. . . . At the age of 60 its memory began to fail. It moulted regularly once a year until the age of 65, when the red feathers of the tail were supplied by yellow ones, after which no other change of plumage took place."

As some thousands of Grey Parrots have been imported since that time, has a similar case ever been known, or would the above account be an exceptional instance of change of colour in the tail?

W. T. CATLEUGH.

### A STORK IN ENGLAND.

SIR,—When travelling by train from Newhaven to London on June 18th, shortly after passing through Lewes, I saw a fine Stork beside a dike in some water meadows. I wonder whether this was a wild bird.

B. C. THOMASSET.

### NEST OF MOCKING BIRD.

SIR,—I was glad to see Mr. Farrar's nest; although, when it reached me, it had lost most of the character which he describes on p. 183, and looked like a small bunch of hay rammed into an elder-crutch.

A. G. BUTLER.

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**  
BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—NO. 11.

*All rights reserved.*

SEPTEMBER, 1901.

---

## SUCCESSFUL BREEDING OF THE PAGODA MYNAH.

By the Rev. C. D. FARRAR.

Experiences are generally very like cheroots; they usually begin badly, taste perfect half-way through, and at the butt-end are things to be thrown away and never picked up again. My experience, however, this time is a distinct exception, for it was happy in the beginning, middle, and end.

It generally takes me a couple of seasons to get a satisfactory pair; and in the case of the Pagodas there was the usual wait. I first of all got hold of a good cock, and then I began to look about for a mate. This proved no easy task. I wrote to that refuge of the destitute, the late Mr. Abrahams, and he sent me what he said was a 'certain' hen. I was not so sure; but I did not like to contradict so old a fancier. Time, however, proved that I was right and that he was wrong; for the so-called hen was a cock and soon showed its sex by battles royal with his fellow prisoner. In these combats one of the contending parties was slain, and, as it was winter, I did not bother any more for the time. This spring, after Easter, I popped up to London for the inside of a week; and, of course, visited all the bird shops. At Mr. Hamlyn's I found, on my second visit, a pair of Pagoda Mynahs just come in off the boat; and, as they looked all right, I bought them; but let them stop with my other purchases until the week-end, when I transferred the lot to Yorkshire.

They appeared to feel the cold a bit at first, but in a week or two seemed to get accustomed to constant changes of temperature. I kept them in a bird room until spring was over, and then I put them out into what I call a beautiful outdoor aviary; but what my family call 'the Stores.' Here they soon settled down in company with a pair of Red-headed Indian Buntings and a pair of Red-vented Bulbuls. I rigged up a box near the roof, in the same place as the Malabar Mynahs nested

last season. It was not long before they took the hint, and went to work at nest building. The nest was composed of little sticks (as I found on examination after the young ones had flown) and was a very flimsy affair. The cock and hen took it by turns to sit; but I think they took certain watches, and not day and night spells. I am unable to say what the eggs were like, as they all hatched out, and I was not so foolish as to touch the nest until the young had flown (a).

The sitting lasted roughly some 13 days; and the first intimation I had of 'new arrivals' was by seeing one of the parents with a small mealworm in its beak with which (by careful and unobtrusive watching) I saw it go aloft. Pagodas are very fond of fresh ants' eggs, especially for the early days of rearing; whereas the Andamans would hardly look at them. The difference in taste in birds is very curious.

After about a week I began to hear the voices of the young, and day by day the noise grew more and more uproarious. The Pagoda parents were the shyest of feeders after the first week. I could never catch them at it, watch as I might. For the first week they did not mind me a bit. The Andamans, on the other hand, were very shy at first, and got bolder as the days went by.

Can the readers of the 'Avicultural' realize what it meant to rear Mocking-birds, Andamans, and Pagodas all side by side? Mr. Phillipps wrote to me quite pathetically. 'No wonder mealworms are so scarce and dear!'

At the end of about a fortnight, or perhaps a little longer, I could see the youngsters at the mouth of the hole, and they seemed to feel the heat very much, as they kept their beaks open. About ten days later, I saw No. 1 sitting on the top of a box tree in the open run. Nos. 2 and 3 followed the next morning. Here again the Pagodas differed from the Andamans: for whereas the young Pagodas flew straight out of doors, the young Andamans remained inside for nearly a week before venturing out of doors. Every night the young Pagodas came home to sleep, and generally passed the night on the top of the nest-box, but they were out of doors all day long.

For the benefit of my readers who do not know the Pagoda I append a brief description:

In size they are rather smaller than an English Starling, very trim and lightly made. The head has a beautiful sweeping

---

(a). I took a second sitting laid by the Pagoda; the eggs are small and blue like a Starling's.—C. D. F.

black crest which falls low down on the neck like a dragoon's plume; the breast and face are salmony brown, wings and back ashen grey, tail black with white tip, rump white, flights inclined to black; 'jackdaw' eye, beak yellow with blue base, feet yellow.

There were, as I said, three youngsters; they are brown little things, with jackdaw eyes; a black spot on the crown where the crest will be some day; yellow beaks, but no blue on them so far, and pink feet.

I have had both them and the Andamans specially photographed, and I only hope that the Society will see its way to publish these pretty groups.

They say that confession is good for the soul; therefore let me end with one. If men are honest, they will tell you that their success in life is more of a wonder to them than it is to you!

## A FEW GORGEOUSLY - COLOURED FOREIGN CAGE BIRDS.

By A. SAVAGE.

Ever since I have kept foreign birds, at this time of the year, when in their gorgeous plumage, I have always been struck with Weaver-birds and a desire to possess a few. But the bad character given them in most books on foreign birds has prevented me from purchasing the various varieties generally imported. However, I could not resist the temptation any longer, and last month I bought a cock bird of each of the following: Oryx or Grenadier Weaver-bird, Orange Bishop, Napoleon Weaver-bird, Madagascar Weaver-bird, Nonpareil-finch, and an Indigo-bird; intending to keep them, by themselves, in a large cage in the dining-room, to enjoy the sight of the brilliant plumage of this little collection.

The idea did not work; I had reckoned without taking into consideration "the hand that rocks the cradle and rules the world," and the possessor of that hand pronounced the large cage in the dining-room a nuisance (from want of space), and the birds had to be turned into the aviary with the collection of various other kinds already there.

When I made the purchase, with the exception of the Nonpareil and the Indigo, the birds were off colour, in their hen-Sparrow garb, and consequently bought at cheap prices; but the few coloured feathers which were appearing on all of

them announced they were cocks, and that their gorgeous plumage was only a question of a few weeks.

From the bad character Weaver-birds are usually branded with, I expected ructions in the aviary as they came into full plumage, but, although they are now nearly in their full Summer attire, I have not noticed any serious disturbance (*δ*). The Indigo certainly can't stand the Nonpareil in too familiar closeness, so the Nonpareil moves off a little, and there is an end of the matter; and the Orange Bishop is just a bit fussy, but that is all the disturbance I have noticed. So far, the Oryx, Madagascar, and Napoleon are model aviary companions. I shall, nevertheless, keep an eye on all, and if they *do* turn out rough, later, they will be removed to other quarters. It is true, I have only male birds of each kind, and they might not be so well behaved if they were in pairs.

Weaver-birds are frugal livers, and will live pretty well on seed alone, but as green food and ants' eggs are always in the aviary where they are, they may eat a little of both—anyway the food is at their disposal “*si le cœur leur en dit*,”—the Nonpareil and Indigo probably do partake of it.

Weaver-birds have no song to boast of. So far I have not heard a sound from the Napoleon; the Madagascar has a lively chirp; the Oryx is continually treating us to his song, the commencement of which is not too bad, but he generally ends with a sound resembling steam escaping through a cracked steampipe or defective steamtap; the Orange Bishop seems to limit his song to the steampipe note alone.

To anybody wishing to have a small collection of birds of handsome plumage, in a cage in a house, or under a verandah, I can recommend those I mention; they are sure to attract the admiration of all who see them, and their brilliant plumage is seen better in a cage, all together in close quarters, than in a large aviary.

---

## THE COMMON SWIFT.

By ARTHUR G. BUTLER, Ph.D.

My own experience of an adult Swift mentioned in Vol. III. of “British Birds with their nests and eggs” is the only recorded instance which I have met with of an attempt to keep this bird in captivity. The bird there mentioned only lived for

---

(*δ*). If Mr. Savage will introduce a Black-headed Weaver, or almost any species of *Hyphantornis* or *Ploceus* into his community, he will have an opportunity pretty speedily of proving the truth of the aspersions on their character.—A. G. B.

three days. On the 16th July of the present year a little girl brought a young Swift to my wife : it had evidently left the nest before it was fully able to fly (the feathers of the under parts not having grown sufficiently to cover the centre of the breast and abdomen), and in the ordinary course of events would inevitably have become the prey of some marauding cat.

On my return home in the evening my wife showed me the bird, and remembering how successful I had been some years since in rearing a Pied Wagtail upon a mixture of crushed sweet biscuit and Abrahams' Insectivorous Food, I proposed that the Swift should be fed upon the same mixture.

Having left the nest, the bird naturally refused to open its mouth ; so that, for a fortnight my wife (who undertook to be chief nurse) was obliged to open its mouth for it for every morsel. I fortunately had an opportunity of securing some fresh wasp-grubs which varied the food for a few days and formed the first inducement to the bird to feed itself : the idea of finding the food when it was hungry, nevertheless did not seem to occur to the Swift, however hungry it might be, so—about every two hours, the food and water had to be offered before it would attempt to eat or drink.

Between meals, and at night, the Swift was kept in a wicker basket with flannel to keep it warm ; but it strongly objected to being shut up, and whenever the lid was opened it would scramble up the side and fly either to the person who happened to be nearest or to the floor. If on the floor it would run at a great rate to anybody who called it. Like the House Martins which I reared in 1891, the Swift took great pleasure in nestling down in one's hand, where it would remain quietly making the queer sizzling sort of purring sound which this bird always utters when feeding, and which at times, when the bird is excited in flight, develops into quite a shrill scream. Another favourite position was—clinging to my wife's or servant's dress near the shoulder, or hanging between the folds of the table-cloth.

Although we caught a good many flies for our Swift, and it seemed to eat the soft mixture with pleasure and digested it without difficulty, I am afraid it did not get sufficient exercise to keep it in vigorous health. After a meal we could make it active by placing it in the basket and leaving the lid open ; then as it scrambled up the side and flew off it was repeatedly put back until it had, as we supposed, had enough exercise for the time ; but it seems to me that a bird which naturally spends a greater part of the day on the wing, taking its food incessantly in small



instalments, can hardly be expected to flourish when fed heavily at long intervals and only then able to take exercise.

During the night of August 14th my wife woke up and took it into her head to go downstairs and have a look at the Swift: it had been especially active the night before, but she found it in a very feeble condition, cold, and unable to attempt to feed. She warmed it in her hands, gave it a little water to drink, and when it began to utter its little monotonous note she gave it a morsel of food. It is still alive as I write, though undoubtedly not likely to live over the day (c).

To keep a Swift in captivity for a month is, I think, a triumph; but I do not recommend any bird-lover, unless he act from feelings of humanity (as my wife has done) to attempt to rear from the nest either Swifts or Swallows; they are affectionate and lovable birds, but their life in captivity must, of necessity, be short. I believe, under favourable conditions, with a properly constructed cage and plenty of insect-food all these birds, might be kept, but they are far better at liberty.

---

## A SUPPOSED NEW WHISTLING-BIRD.

(*Myiophoneus* . . . . . ?)

By REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

(Continued from page 191).

For a time, as I have already said, I left him loose in my mixed aviary, for he seemed amiable and peaceable; in truth, he never *quarrelled* with the birds, but—when he wanted fresh meat for dinner, he helped himself. A man does not *quarrel* with his flocks and herds, but he *eats* them nevertheless when he finds it convenient to do so. He was so terribly shy and anxious to hide that his real nature did not immediately betray itself. One by one a few small birds disappeared, and my suspicions were aroused. On hearing any sound of alarm, I would rush into the aviary, in time to pick up a warm corpse more or less mangled but not to see the murderer. Each body had been ripped open from the vent, and the soft parts attacked. I felt that Bob must be the culprit, so, with the keenest regret, cut his wings. But the murders continued; so I again cut the wings, this time so short that he ought to have been helpless; and I supposed that I should be able to drive him into one of the large cages and shut him up at night or whenever I might desire.

---

(c). It died that evening.—A. G. B.

Vain hope ! so far as my aviary and birdroom were concerned, Bob was independent of wings, and without difficulty bounded up to the highest perches like some spring-heeled Jack ; and as to driving him into a cage at nightfall, I found that I just couldn't do it, and so had to leave him loose all night. At day-break on the following morning, I crept down stairs to the bird-room. Some of the birds were still in bed, some waking up and stretching themselves, others attending to their morning toilet, while several little fellows were already on the feed. And Bob ? Hidden away in a quiet corner, Bob was standing as motionless as if he had been in a glass case in one of the galleries at the Museum ; and not a bird seemed to be within his reach. Softly I closed the door on the peaceful scene, and faced bedwards, but had not mounted two steps when the Alarm ! was sounded by a chorus of throats. I rushed back, and found Bob some yards away from where I had left him but a few seconds previously, killing and ripping open a bird. "Killing" is hardly the word, for death must have been instantaneous. Bob was digging the claw of the hind toe of the right foot with great power and determination into the body of the bird. If you watch a man digging heavy ground, he will force the spade into the ground with all the strength of the fully extended outstretched right leg. So was Bob, with his right leg extended, digging his hind claw, with intense earnestness and decision, into the body of his hapless victim, and simultaneously was ripping it open from the vent.

Thus did Bob throw away his last opportunity of leading a freer and a better life. He was immediately netted and shut up ; and he passed the winter months in a six-foot cage in my dining-room. There I several times saw him use his right leg in a way similar to that described, proving to my mind that to do so is the natural instinct of the bird. When I have placed a cockroach trap in the cage, I have repeatedly seen him dart at a cockroach and simultaneously attempt to dig the hind claw of one foot, I think always the right, into the body of the trap. Sometimes, too, when fiddling a martial air, he would work himself up into a state of frenzy, and would dart at some imaginary bird on a neighbouring perch—never on the ground—which he would instantaneously and simultaneously kill with his heel and rip up with his bill : it is part of the ingrained nature of the bird.

We always, I think, associate a Thrush in our mind with an innocent songster, and therefore the name of Whistling-Thrush commonly applied to the genus seems incongruous. In

saying this I am supposing that all the species of the genus *Myiophoneus* are rapacious like the subject under consideration, but on this point I am without information. I have not often kept a true Shrike, and do not know if they, or any of them, kill their prey with only the hind claw in the manner I have described ; but it seems to me that Bob is more nearly allied in his habits, although not in build and movements, to the Shrikes than to the Thrushes. In shape he is rather Chat-like, in some of his movements very Robin-like ; he holds up his head, and will occasionally jerk up his tail and take a short run (*d*), remarkably like our Robin Redbreast, and promises before long to assert himself with all Cock Robin's boldness and confidence. The name "Whistling-Shrike," therefore, would be inadmissible ; but "Whistling-Bird" would suit well enough, and the misleading word "Thrush" would thus be avoided. I have noticed but one Thrush-like habit in my bird, and that is hammering stones, &c., against the bottom of his cage. Occasionally I have succeeded in getting a snail for him, and the shells of these he smashed by banging them about rather than against any special stone ; so far he has always devoured the snails. Some cotton reels in his cage he would sometimes bang against the floor with such violence as to be heard half over the house.

When we consider the manner in which he kills a bird, we might suppose that he would hold his food down with one or both feet while pecking at it. But this is not the case. I have never seen him do so except on the one occasion when he was detected whilst actually engaged in killing a bird. If I give him any food of any kind, say a bone to pick, and he used to like a pheasant or chicken bone, or even that of a mutton chop, he picks at it as if he considered that the bone ought to be fixed, but never touches it with his foot. Perchance in his wild state he would, Shrike-like, fix his prey on to a thorn or spike of some kind, and would then be able to pick at it to some purpose.

At page 2 of Vol. VII. of the Catalogue, Dr. Bowdler Sharpe seems inclined to find fault with Mr. Seebohm for having excluded this (and other) species from the Thrushes (*Turdidæ*). I do not understand that the young of *Myiophoneus* have the spotted plumage of the *Turdidæ* ; and probably Mr. Seebohm was not far wrong in excluding them.

On May 3, Bob was transferred to a house I had had built for him in the garden aviary, consisting of a sheltered inner

---

(*d*). Not strictly correct as regards the "run" of the Robin ; the Blackbird on the lawn might be more accurate.—K. P.

chamber about four feet, and an outer flight nearly eight feet, high. In order to clean either division, it is considered desirable to drive him into the other, for the doors are large, and he is now a brazen-faced Bob, and hides himself only on the appearance of strangers. But Bob was perverse, and would not allow himself to be driven from the outer chamber, which consequently had to remain uncleared for some days. On May 9, I decided that such open rebellion and defiant disobedience was bad for the discipline of the establishment, and that Bob must be brought to book forthwith. Our bird-woman having brought all her things ready, I told her to look out, and produced from under the flap of my coat a short-handled bird-net; "OH WHERE — ? GOOD GRACIOUS HE'S GONE," exclaimed the startled woman, staring all about the larger *outer* aviary to see what had become of Bob who, on the production of the net, had "melted into air, into thin air, and . . . left not a rack behind." Trained as my eyes had been all my life to watch birds and animals, in olden days an expert shot and a good cricketer, I should have deemed it impossible for a bird as large as a pigeon to have dropped down perpendicularly about three feet, and then to have darted off at a right angle to get under his shed, without being seen; but so it was. We were within a few feet and had our eyes on him, and yet his movement was so rapid that our eyes had been unable to take it in and detect it. The upper part of the outward extension, where the bird was, is constructed entirely of wire-netting, and the woman thought he had burst clean through and had fled off. I knew that that was impossible; but I must confess that I felt very "creepy," and scanned the outer division of his house most carefully, before I cautiously and nervously opened the door. Bob is a wise bird in his generation, for since that day he has obeyed orders with alacrity, and it has not again been necessary to produce the net for the same purpose.

When transferred to the garden, Bob at first set himself to catch the birds which came near his house; but he quickly saw that it couldn't be done, and for some weeks seemed to think no more about them. The only bird of whom he took any notice was an immature male Regent (*Sericulus melinus*), whose presence he invariably recognises with a lively chattering, sometimes like that of the Missel-Thrush when its young are approached, but whether a chattering of peace or war I did not for some time know. They are both loquacious; and I thought that perhaps each recognised in the other a kindred spirit, or possibly a rival for vocal honours. Nevertheless I regarded it

as ominous that the "kissing" should have been so one-sided, for the Regent never returned the salute. Slowly but surely Bob is becoming civilized, and is losing his native habits and customs. Eight months and more of close confinement, with nothing to do but to eat, drink, and grow fat, is enough to spoil any bird. It is almost a calamity that he should be thus confined, for he is a very active bird, and requires much more exercise than he can now enjoy.

His voice is hardly correctly described as a whistle. Every now and then he comes out with a soft and gentle song, like some of the notes of the Redbreast. Sometimes he descends the scale to a series of guttural croaks. Altogether his voice approaches nearest to the music of the violin. Perhaps Bob would tell us, if he were asked, that the guttural notes are those of his native violoncello. The name of Fiddling-bird, or The Fiddler, would suit him well. Whilst in the house, his varied music gave us great pleasure; but now he is in the garden it is almost lost in the din and babel of a mixed aviary. He has several little notes, such as the chuckle of approval, the plaintive twittering and dog-like whine of anxiety or want, the prolonged high pitched call-note, and the like, some of them very expressive. The gurgling notes seem to be the war or hunting notes, as at any rate they are occasionally used when he is in hot pursuit, like a terrier giving tongue when it starts a rabbit.

Bob is not delicate for a foreign bird, but he does not like cold, and rarely takes a bath except in fairly warm weather. Occasionally he will take an uneasy sun bath; nevertheless, civilized as he has now become, he seems irresistibly drawn to his highest lookout perch or to the darkest corner of his den.

Since he has been shut up I have experienced some difficulty in feeding him satisfactorily. I cannot reconcile myself to the thought of giving him birds, and insectivorous food he will hardly look at. When I purchased him, he had absolutely nothing in his cage but raw meat. This is too heavy as a regular diet; and I now feed him principally on scraped cooked meat and a general mixture, with occasional treats of carefully scraped raw meat, and such insects as I can obtain. Occasionally he will take a garden worm; mealworms I find may only be given with caution. Just now and then he will take a bit of fruit as medicine. For a while he seemed to be going wrong; so lately I have taken to driving the other birds into the bird-room, and then letting him out for a fly. This has quite restored him; and it has also re-awakened in him his thirst for blood, which I

had hoped might have been allayed. As quick as thought he was in a hole, and as nearly as possible caught a sitting Nutmeg Finch, whose nest I had been unacquainted with; and only the immediate production of the net averted a catastrophe. Every time he is let out, he carefully overhauls all the nesting boxes. For the first three or four outings, I did not trouble to drive a few of the larger birds out of the aviary. I found, and it is suggestive, that, when he had had a good supply of *raw* meat on the previous day, he troubled himself but little about the other birds, but that when the raw meat (and nothing would take its place) had not been supplied, he was most murderously inclined, attacking even such a powerful bird as the Green Oriole (*Oriolus viridis*); and an unfortunate Pied Rock-Thrush, who one day had hidden away instead of seeking the shelter of the birdroom, was unearthed and nearly disposed of notwithstanding my immediate rush with the net. Bob went after him with as deadly a purpose as a female Sparrow-Hawk just off her nest in the evening would have done. His powers of flight seemed to be infinitely greater than that of the Thrush; and the latter exhibited little of the clever dodging that I should credit the species with; but my bird is as fat as a pig and no longer young, and seemed quite panic-stricken. On one occasion the Regent was left out, and Bob went straight for him; but I always keep the net handy now. It would take a clever bird to strike a Regent; the latter was like a Magpie dodging a Peregrine; but he uttered a shriek of terror which I had never heard before and hope never to hear again; and it was a day or two before he fully got over the scare. Since that occasion, the aviary, with one curious exception, is most carefully cleared of every bird before Bob is liberated.

It is curious how often birds form the most erroneous opinion of the nature and power of other birds. When first let out this summer, I tossed a mealworm down for Bob, which fell near to an aged Black-breasted Peewit, an Australian three-toed Wattled Lapwing (*Sarciphorus pectoralis*). The latter, a bottomless-pit so far as mealworms are concerned, and too stupid to recognise his danger, disregarding Bob, ran for the mealworm and obtained it. The Peewit's apparent pluck on this occasion seems so to have impressed Bob that he always gets out of the Peewit's way, and treats him with awe and respect. Yet if a fly should wink, or a moth flutter, this creature will dash recklessly off, anywhere, and often get hung and hopelessly entangled in the trees and bushes. For over eleven years has he been in my garden, and times without number during those eleven years

have I had to release him from tight places and set him on his feet again, and yet to this day, when touched by the human hand, he will startle the neighbours far and wide with his fearful cries. The instant his feet touch the ground, the cries cease, he shakes out his feathers, elevates his head, and gives a defiant crow, saying as plainly as plain can be, "Escaped again, old chap ; it would take a lot of such bipeds as you to get over me." If it had been the privilege of the poet Gray to have lived within ear-shot of my aviary, he would not have wasted ink and paper over "Berkley's roof," but would rather have said :—

"The shrieks of death, thro' Cromwell Grove that ring,  
Shrieks of an agoniz'd Lap-wing!"

and it is to this big coward and swaggering braggart that Bob bows down and does obeisance.

In the Museum Catalogue (Key to the Species, Vol. VII. p. 6), the eleven described species in the genus *Myiophoneus* are divided into two groups, those which have white tips to the median wing-coverts and those which have not. Bob has the white tips, and therefore should come into the first group. Of the three species included in this group, only one has a black bill, and that is the Blue Whistling-bird from China, *Myiophoneus cæruleus*, of which I will speak later. The two new species are unlike; but there is one in the other group which has several points of resemblance, *M. dicrorhynchus*, a bird too coming from Sumatra, which might easily be picked up by a Queensland steamer. This species is thus described in the Catalogue :—  
*Adult.* General colour above dull purplish black, with a large tuft of white feathers at the side of the lower back and rump; no shoulder-patch, and no white tips to the median coverts, the wings and tail being also like the back, the latter only a little more blue; lores, sides of face, and ear-coverts black, with a shade of purplish blue across the upper forehead; entire under surface of body dusky black, with concealed white bases to all the breast feathers. Total length 13 inches, culmen 1.5, wing 6.4, tail 4.4, tarsus 2.1. At page 7 it is stated, "glistening ends of feathers obsolete; bill blackish, horn-coloured at the tip and on the lower mandible." The points of similarity between this bird and mine are noticeable, but the points of difference are too marked to be easily explained away. Each bird has a tuft on its side, but that of *M. dicrorhynchus* seems to be made up of white instead of party-coloured feathers. The general colour above is not dull purplish black; my bird now has both the shoulder-patch and white tips to the median coverts; the under

surface of body is hardly dusky black, and the breast feathers have not white *bases*; the glistening ends of feathers are not obsolete; the bill is wholly black; and the tail is fully 5 inches long. I took the total length on May 3 as  $11\frac{1}{4}$  inches or perhaps more, but as a skin it is possible that he might be stretched to 13 inches.

There remains but one other bird to be considered, viz., the Blue Whistling-bird (*M. caeruleus*) from China. The recent appearance (June) of the patch of blue on the lesser coverts of my bird not only brings it closer to *M. caeruleus* but practically demonstrates that, when it was handled on May 3, its plumage was far from being fully developed. Moreover, some of the points I noted on the first three examinations, and from the feathers cast in the moult, may have been marks of the immature but not of the adult bird, and may now be non-existent. For instance, I cannot say that Bob now has a single brown feather. The country of origin, moreover, cannot be *proved* to be New Guinea; and therefore we must not allow that point, all-important if it could be substantiated, to unduly prejudice our judgment. Speaking broadly, the two birds are nearly identical; and several of the minor points of difference may be simply differences of opinion as to a shade of colour; moreover I am in doubt as to what limits should be imposed on the statement of the Catalogue "lower back and rump ashy black with concealed longitudinal centres of white." But it seems to me that it would be straining the language a good deal to suppose that the statement includes, not only the feathers which can be correctly described as having concealed white centres, but also those which are white on the whole or the greater part of one web. And no mention is made of feathers on the breast having concealed white centres.

This spring there has arrived at the Zoological Gardens a nice specimen of the Blue Whistling-bird (*M. caeruleus*). I have been able to obtain but momentary peeps at the bird, and cannot speak definitely even of its outward appearance, and not at all of the concealed markings. It seems to have the breast, etc., mottled in the same manner as my bird, to have the same white spots on the wing, the same saddle-back appearance when startled, the same boat-shaped tail, and in general shape, action, and movement, to be just the same; on the other hand, it seemed to be smaller, less stoutly built, and to be very much more blue. These were my impressions; but it is exceedingly difficult and dangerous to compare in one's mind the particulars of one bird with those of another in a different place and under



different circumstances. According to the Catalogue, this is a very well known species, pretty generally distributed over China, and "common and resident in the central and southern portions of the country." The total length is given as 12 inches, but the tail as only 4.6; and the claws are stated to be brown, whereas those of my bird are still (July 9), as they always have been, deep black.

---

I had intended obtaining the aid of an aviculturist and having a full examination made of the new plumage of my bird, and to have closed this paper with a report of the result, but on July 8 I was startled by his casting one of his brand-new primaries, and by the "teased" look of the wing-coverts; another was cast on the following day, and two more and some secondaries on July 10. The intense heat, the want of exercise, and the unnatural food seem to have produced a heated condition of the blood and this seemingly false moult; so I determined to examine him forthwith, and did so on July 9. It will be seen that the result of this examination differs in some important points from that of May 3, but I simply give the particulars as I found them. I may add, however, that on May 3 I had an expert in colours (not an aviculturist) to assist me, who fully agreed with the statement of colours already given, and who, by the way, was a witness to the produced ends of the tail shafts. On this occasion I had splendid light, and Bob was reasonably quiet.

Under side of tail black; under tail-coverts purplish blue; thighs black; abdomen deep black, with neither blue tips nor white centres; all the rest of the under surface black, profusely mottled with bright blue ends to all the feathers. These, commencing on the chest with white shafts, and steadily increasing in size as the abdomen is approached, have concealed longitudinal centres of white. Ear-coverts and sides of face and neck black or purplish black, each feather boldly tipped with silvery blue. When holding himself erect, a side view of the neck has the appearance of a richly spangled mane, the glistening tips running down the neck in fairly well-defined channels. Lores black with no bright tips, the black extending back in a distinct unspotted line above the eye but scarcely behind it. Head, neck, and mantle apparently black, but no black base to forehead visible; on the forehead, and completely occupying the forehead, there are two "comets" of light silvery-blue tips, with their tails streaming back along each side of the crown. Hind centre of crown, nape, and front centre of mantle black, with only a

few stray silvery tips ; rest of mantle with silvery tips ; lesser coverts and tips to median coverts as before. Remiges much more blue than before the moult, becoming more blue as the body is approached, the four cast primaries having the outer webs purplish blue, the inner black with a faint wash of purple towards the ends, but tipped with dusky black. The ends of the shafts of the tail feathers, although somewhat knocked about, were still clearly visible, and just about one-sixteenth of an inch long. No brown feathers nor feathers with brown bases could be detected, so probably they are a mark of immaturity.

Owing to the struggles of the bird, I could not definitely locate the semi-white feathers of the flanks and lower back ; they are rather long, and got mixed and twisted up together in a regular tangle. But I am of opinion that I detected one decided change ; the dark portions of these feathers, or many of them, seem now to be black without any shade of blue. These semi-white partly concealed feathers, and the breast feathers with concealed white centres, not to mention other minor differences, seem clearly to point to this bird being of a hitherto undescribed species, which should be known, if the country of origin could be made sure, as the NEW GUINEA WHISTLING-BIRD.

---

[August 20.—My bird has fallen into what seems to be a full and natural moult. I suppose that, owing to the voyage, change of climate, &c., the former moult was a deferred one. I notice that two large Australian birds in my aviary, the Regent-bird and the Green Oriole, commenced their annual moult about the same time. Nature is trying to set things straight ; but the two moults succeeding one another so closely must put a great strain on the bird's constitution.—R.P.]

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### LETTERS ON THE BIRDS OF JAMAICA.

#### No. I.

SIR,—Lovely as Jamaica is, and richly though it rewards you for the trouble of coming out to see it, I don't think it a mine of wealth from an avicultural point of view—so far, at least, as I have seen up to the present. Quite the most prominent figure in the bird world is the Johnny Crow, and having heard so much about his want of personal attractions I am agreeably surprised, for he is quite decently good looking. He is about half as big again as a raven, with a finer spread of wing, and flies very gracefully, floating and balancing from side to side. Some people might object to his raw meat head and neck, but the expression of his face is not disagreeable. There is a price of £5 put upon his head, that is to say, it is valued at that sum, in which you are mulcted if you destroy him ; his services as a scavenger being highly valued, and his occasional lapses from virtue, when

in forgetfulness he picks up a chicken or so, are excused. He is very tame, hangs about the houses closely, and wherever there is a pole, an article which is a good deal dotted about, you are sure to see a crow on the top of it. After one of the warm torrential showers, which come now and again, it is quite grand to see a row of poles topped by crows with their wings fully spread to dry.

In the garden of our hotel at Kingston, I saw a couple of Mocking Birds, grey brown in colour, with white feathers in their long jerking tails. They are called Nightingales, and their song is a mixture of Thrush and Blackbird, but louder and more melodious than either. The birds seemed very tame, and picked about in the grass. More numerous are exaggerated Blackbirds, with a longer tail than our English friend and bigger, but minus the bright orange bill. One of these had a nest, about which he or she was quarrelling with another, but there was nothing in it. As I have no books with me except Russ's Speaking Parrots, I am not able to identify the birds, which is annoying. We saw no small birds in Kingston, but on the way to Mandeville, two and a half hours by train, through beautiful tropical vegetation, we saw a good many, all of sober colours and so quick in their movements that it was impossible to describe them. I am told the most interesting of all is the Solitaire Thrush, but have no hope of penetrating to the fastnesses in the woods and mountains, where alone he is to be found. What, I suppose, everyone desires most to see is the Humming Bird. On first view the common kind, which is very numerous in some places and occasional in all, is disappointing, giving one the impression of a very dark blue object, and which flies in a curious upright position, as it were, standing on its tail in the air. But as I was watching one darting from flower to flower of a group of canna's, not in the manner of the Humming Bird Hawk Moth, as we are usually told, but hovering, and, as it were, hanging upright at the lip of the blossom, it suddenly flew to my parasol and tried the tips of several of the spokes. I thus had a very close view, when the beautiful iridescence on the little thing's breast, back, and tail was visible, shining in red and purple lustre. It was a stout little bird, about as big as a Wren, and not the vision of fragility I expected. But there are, of course, smaller ones which I have not yet seen. There is no bird shop in Kingston, nor, so far as I have been able to ascertain, anywhere else in the island; and although I took several electric car journeys all round the town, besides buggy drives, for the express purpose of searching out parrots and other birds in private possession, I only saw one, a nice Cuban Amazon, hanging in one of the terrible cages made of flat wide metal bars we have most of us seen acting prison to newly-imported birds, outside a queer little booth-shop, devoted, if I may remember aright, to the sale of charcoal, castor oil and mangoes.

At Mandeville, however, we found three parrots, two of the little native Amazons which are found in the mountains, and are, I imagine, Sallé's Amazon (e), and one Yellow front. The latter is not an interesting bird, but one of the little things talks very nicely. They are kept in the same dreadful cages, very small, desperately dirty, and without a vestige of sand,

---

(e). Sallé's Amazon (*Chrysotis ventralis*) seems to be confined to San Domingo. Probably the little Active Amazon (*C. agilis*) is intended, or possibly the Red-throated Amazon (*C. collaria*).—R. P.

and fed on watery sop, with a few peppers now and then ; but when let out they show no disposition to get away, but go back quite contentedly to their dreadful prisons. I asked the price of this talking bird, which was hanging in a general store, and was told 40/-, which is, of course, rather absurd. The proprietor may come down from this lofty altitude, if so "Serita," as the negroes called the bird, may go home with me. The ship's captain on the voyage out told me there was a nine-months' quarantine imposed on all parrots landing in England, as they were supposed to bring the plague in their feathers, but whether this is true or not I have yet to find out. It seems odd, however, that the dealers should advertise them so freely and at such low prices if quarantine of any kind has been performed. The season to buy these birds here is in September, when the young parrots of the summer are brought down by negroes from the Blue Mountains where they have been bred, and are sold at very low prices, two or three shillings each at most. Just now, however, I was warned that I should be asked ten dollars or so for acclimatised birds, which has proved to be the case.

When driving along the lovely roads hereabouts we see a good many birds which give us no chance of distinguishing them, but none that are gay of plumage. The "Black Sparrow" is about as big as a butcher bird, with a red throat in front, and seems to be a jolly little chap, and more friendly than the rest. It is very difficult to understand what the black people say until you are used to them, and I am therefore unable to give you the local names for one or two other sober little birds we met. The Banana-bird is, I am told, a beautiful yellow creature, and not at all uncommon, but we have not succeeded in interviewing him. A solitary Ground Dove, seen by the roadside in a guinea-grass planting, elicited the remark from the driver that the cruel mongoose (pronounced mangoose) had cleared this family out even more completely than the rest of the birds, which as a whole are only now beginning to recover from the tyranny of "Pikki Tikki." I have left instructions at our Kingston Hotel for the man who goes down to the boats to sell birds to the sailors to be, if possible, invited to call on me when we return there before starting home; and if I succeed in interviewing him the readers of the "Avicultural Magazine" shall hear of any interesting purchases I may be able to make. But the cult of birds seems an unknown thing in the town, for outside the solitary parrot I have mentioned, and one very poor Canary of the commonest description in the hotel, I saw not a single cage.

I am sorry this is not an interesting description, but the birds are really most disappointing. I take it that until we come over to settle here, and are able to observe them at complete leisure, it will not be possible to make a readable article out of them.

N. L. WILLIAMS.

---

#### GOULDIAN FINCH ILL.

SIR,—I should be much obliged if you could assist me in the treatment of a sick hen Gouldian Finch.

She is not egg bound, but is suffering from some form of digestive disorder, I fancy, as her crop is quite empty, although she is always eating.

Her feathers are all standing like a bird which has just had a thorough soaking in water, though they are quite dry. She now and

then gapes like a fowl with that complaint. She will eat any amount of butter which I give her. I can't find anything obstructing her throat, and the bowels are working freely.

As this is not the first case I have had of this kind, and which I expect will terminate fatally, as did the previous cases, I should be glad of any information you could supply towards a cure or prevention in future.

I should add that since being "in hospital" the bird has laid an egg, but is not one whit the better for it. W. G. DOUGLAS.

*The following reply was sent to Mr. Douglas :*

If you feed a finch upon butter, you can hardly be surprised that she should suffer from a sort of digestive disorder. Butter is not a natural food for any bird. If you have given butter with a view to oiling the works, because seed did not remain in the crop, I can only suppose that you have been using shell-sand, and the chips of shell have cut through the crop, so that it cannot retain the seed : this is a cause of death in many finches. Sea-sand is the proper sand to use for all birds. I use no other kind.

A. G. BUTLER.

#### PARROT FINCHES BREEDING.

SIR,—In looking over some notes re Parrot Finches I do not recollect that any of our members have recorded two peculiarities when giving an account of their birds breeding.

Whether mine were an exceptional pair I cannot say. They were put up three times for breeding. The first time a broken egg was found at the bottom of the cage containing two young. In this and the following evening a most peculiar noise came from the nest resembling the whir-r-r or rolling notes made by the Nightjar. At first I could not locate where the sound came from, and went to the door thinking it came from the Colonel's ground opposite, yet I thought it strange for them to be there, never having heard them nearer than Snelsmore Common, about a mile and a half away. At last I found the sound came from the birds in the nest. It seemed a song of triumph that there was an increase to the population. At intervals of a few days two more eggs with living chicks were thrown out, then an extra large egg with two young. The last performance was the infanticide of a bird (which was forwarded to our late Secretary to see what a fine fellow he was.) The little fellow used to cry out lustily of an evening for the parents to feed it, but why it was expelled from the nest after being cared for nearly three weeks (for it was well nourished) I cannot understand.

The second and third time proved no more successful, and I lost heart. I believe the fault was with the lady, for she was wild, but the cock when talked to would flutter his wings, showing the under part close to the body of a biscuit colour. My failure at cage breeding was borne out by our member, Mr. Savage, who twice failed when he had them in a cage, but was successful in the aviary (f). W. T. CATLEUGH.

(f). See Vol. III., page 167.

### "THE CAPE SPARROW."

SIR,—In the *Avicultural Magazine* for July last, I recorded the fact of a pair of Cape Sparrows (*Passer arcuatus*) having nested, though unsuccessfully, in my aviary. I now have the pleasure of placing on record the successful rearing of a young bird by this pair. It left the nest on the 3rd of August and can now (20th August) feed itself well, and the parents are building another nest. This young bird very nearly resembles a young House Sparrow, but the crescent on the side of the head (whence its specific name) is distinctly visible, as is also the chestnut brown on the scapulars and rump. In fact it resembles closely the adult female with the exception of some white markings on the flights and tail-feathers which I attribute to partial albinism.

Am I correct in stating this to be the first instance of *Passer arcuatus* having bred in England?  
D. SETH-SMITH.

### CONURES KILLING THEIR YOUNG.

SIR,—Would you tell me if I can bring young Nauday Parrakeets up by hand? I very much fear the old birds will kill them all as soon as they leave the nesting-log. They nested some weeks ago, and had five fine fully-fledged young birds. I expected daily to see them fly, and, wondering at their non-appearance, looked into the nesting-log, and found that one young Parrakeet, fully-fledged and quite fat, had been killed by a piercing blow at the back of the skull completely smashing the head. The remaining four birds are well, and, I should say, may fly any day.

I do not know if this is a peculiarity of Conures. My Orange-fronted Conures killed their two eldest offspring in exactly the same way, only waited for them to leave the nest-box. In this latter case I placed the third, a fine fully feathered young bird, in a box cage: I *believe* the parents fed it, as it did not die, and is now in the aviary with an injured wing, how caused I do not know.

I cannot understand why the parents should suddenly become so savage. In the case of the Yellow-fronted Conures, I did not know a nest existed until I discovered the two dead bodies of the young birds. The Nandays *have* been looked at from time to time, but the parents apparently did not object.

I should be much obliged if you could tell me if I can prevent the remaining birds sharing the same terrible fate. Would you also tell me if either of these Conures has bred in captivity; I can find no mention of such an event in any of the books or magazines.

I find them perfectly trustworthy in a mixed collection, and they never touched the young Redrumps when they flew; they never quarrel, and are most affectionate with each other.  
M. JOHNSTONE.

*The following is the substance of the reply that was sent to Mrs. Johnstone.*

All the Conures I have kept have been warm tempered birds who would object to their young being inspected; some of them are intensely jealous. It was not a wise proceeding.

But it is rather common for warm tempered birds *in captivity* (too much food and too little exercise) to want to go to nest again too soon, and to want to get rid of their young prematurely. The male is usually the aggressor.

I should watch closely and, if necessary, remove the male only. If the female should find four young birds too much for her, remove two and leave her two. Watch and see she does not lay unfertile eggs and sit on them.

If compelled to remove any of the young from the mother, you might try your former experiment and place them in a box cage in their father's aviary, but placing food in their own cage.

It would be very difficult to hand-rear the young if they would not feed themselves. The way would be to chew up the food in your mouth, and place the bill of the young bird between your lips, and let it feed from the food inside.

But probably they are too old to be tame enough to feed from your mouth, and probably they are old enough to feed themselves if you place in their cage some of the following foods:—Banana, boiled maize, boiled rice, plain biscuit, sponge cake, date (cut in small pieces), cut up raisins, fig, pear, grapes, and any green food with which the parents were supplied; and crushed canary seed might be sprinkled over some of the softer food. Let there be a dish of crushed canary mixed with crumbled plain biscuit, and on the top lay some pieces of date, raisin, fig, etc. Also supply spray millet.

---

At page 171 of *Notes on Cage Birds*, you will find an account of the breeding of Naudays in confinement, and of the probable rearing of two young birds. See also page 531 of *The Bazaar*, of the 5th October, 1892.

I am not sure to what species you refer under the names of Orange and Yellow-fronted Conure. Assuming that you mean either Petz's (*Conurus canicularis*) or the Golden-crowned (Half-moon) Conure (*C. aureus*), I must admit that I cannot find any notice of the rearing of either species in this country. But they have so often been imported, and in the past sometimes in large numbers, especially the Half-moon, that it is more than likely that they have been bred.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

---

THE  
**Avicultural Magazine,**

BEING THE JOURNAL OF THE  
AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.

---

VOL. VII.—No. 12.

*All rights reserved.*

OCTOBER, 1901.

---

**BREEDING OF THE ROLLER IN CAPTIVITY.**

By W. H. ST. QUINTIN.

Everybody must admire the brilliant, but harmonious, colours of a Roller; but it is not every aviculturist who cares to give the space, and attention necessary to keep these fine birds in health and good condition. As I can not learn that Rollers have been bred in captivity, or at any rate in this country, I venture to send a short account of my birds, and their breeding operations during this last summer.

A fine young bird, which turned out to be a male, came into my possession in the autumn of 1897; and from one of our members I obtained a pair, of which the male soon died, the following spring. The two surviving birds were put into a compartment of my heated aviary, with a sufficiently spacious "fly"; their companions being some Indigo-birds, Nonpareils, a pair of Painted Quails, and a male and two females of the Sandgrouse, (*P. quadricinctus*). The latter have never been interfered with, but I soon found it necessary to remove the smaller birds, as, especially in the spring, the male Roller was not to be trusted. The female was from the first timid; and until this spring she never allowed the male to approach her; though he seemed willing enough to make friends. As I have before described in the Magazine, he was exceedingly tame with me; and often tried to induce me to accept a blackbeetle or a mealworm, after taking a perch on my head or shoulder. After vainly paying the female similar attentions, I have seen him, apparently losing all patience, drive at her, and knock her off her perch, which of course did not conduce to a more friendly feeling on her part. I could do nothing but hope that in time she might lose her timidity; and in the meanwhile I endeavoured to get her into as good condition as possible by careful feeding,



and especially by increasing their insect food as the natural nesting season in each year approached.

It was not till last May had well advanced that I noticed that the female was becoming bolder, and more friendly towards her mate: while both of them, to my delight, put on an unusual bloom upon their plumage, the female curiously showing more blue in the tints of her neck, throat and breast; while the other bird was much more green in those parts. A stranger would, from outward appearances, undoubtedly have mistaken the sexes of this pair; if he did not happen to hear the ringing harsh croak, so much more powerful and prolonged in the male bird; and which he always accompanied by throwing his head up in the well known attitude of the Great Australian Laughing Jackass.

Presently the female was seen to fly in and out of the large hollow log, and there were other unmistakable signs which indicated that at last my hopes were in a fair way to be realized.

As we had to be very careful not to disturb the birds, it is impossible to assign exact dates; but we thought that laying commenced on the 13th June; while young birds were first heard calling for food on the 2nd of July.

The birds were kept well supplied with mealworms, gentles, and such beetles as could be collected, as well as their ordinary mixture of rabbit chopped up with the fur, and small bones, mice and hard boiled egg. Fortunately, while feeding the young on insects, the parents continued to eat the chopped meat, &c. themselves, which of course made matters easier. I have found in the case of other insectivorous birds, such as Rock Thrushes, that, as long as there were insects going, their ordinary food was neglected; and it is hard to keep both parents and brood on insect diet, as at midsummer mealworms are difficult to obtain in quantity. As the young advanced the rabbit and egg were taken up to the nest; and presently we were able to add wasp grubs to the *menu*.

On July the 22nd, the young were still heard calling lustily in the log-nest, and the parents were frequently carrying up food, and all seemed going on most satisfactorily. In the evening my man told me that the female had been fighting badly with the male; and I found him crouching in a corner of the aviary watching her; while his mate was jealously keeping him away from the nest. After I had separated them, he, poor fellow,

seemed so anxious to perform his duties to the young, fluttering up with food in his beak against the glass partition, almost refusing food himself, that I with some diffidence put them together again. This was a bad move, for the virago attacked her husband with such violence that he sustained serious injuries on the head, chiefly I think in his efforts to avoid her dashes, and though I got him out as soon as I could, he pined away and died the third day, to my great regret. Fortunately this quarrel did not divert the female from her duties, and she continued diligently to feed the young. On the 28th July, (26 days after the young were first heard) one of the young Rollers left the nest. It could perch and fly well from the first; and two days later another appeared. For about a week the young returned to the log to sleep; and it was some time before I liked to examine the nest hole. When I did there were no more eggs left unhatched, as I expected would have been the case; but there was so much rubbish in the hole, the excreta of the young never having been removed, that other unfertile eggs may have been crushed up, and not seen.

Inside the cavity there was a slight covering of rotten wood; but though the parents had been occasionally seen with material in their beaks, nothing that could be called a nest was found when the log was taken down to be cleaned out.

The young were surprisingly active, when they left the nest, and soon began to feed themselves. They are much paler in all their tints than the parents, and at this age might easily be distinguished, even on the wing, from the adults. Anybody who feels interested in these birds may see them in the Western Aviary at the Zoological Gardens, where they have just been deposited; as in view of a possible brood next year, I thought it well to send them off, and to replace them by an adult male, which has been for some time well taken care of for me at the Gardens in Regent's Park.

---

## BREEDING OF THE RUFOUS-TAILED GRASSFINCH.

(*Bathilda ruficauda*).

By ALFRED E. NICHOLSON.

My experience of this delightful species is very limited, and only dates back to last Autumn, when I succeeded, after years of waiting, in procuring a pair from one of our members. They were in perfect plumage, but to the experienced eye it was evident the cock was not robust. They were exhibited at our

New Year Show, which extends over two days and necessitated their being in the hall over-night. This circumstance cost the cock his life, but I was fortunate in being able to replace him with another that spent his days, when not eating, singing to his new-found wife.

They were located in a small indoor aviary, or perhaps it would be more correct to call it a large cage, with such other inmates as Cordon-bleus, Gouldian, Parrot, Pectoral, Cherry, Bicheno, and Grey Singing-finches. I fear they were rather overcrowded, and the Rufous-tails being a new species to me, I kept them under somewhat close surveillance for some time, but never witnessed them display the least sign of bad temper towards their companions.

First week of May I turned out some thirty small seed-eaters, amongst which were the Rufous-tails. Their first clutch of four eggs was deposited in a husk, but no attempt at incubation was made. The second, of six, was laid in a small travelling box hanging in the indoor portion of the aviary, and in which a beautiful domed nest was built; the material used including live grass, willow shavings, and fine paper shavings (such as chocolates are packed in); but if there is one thing Rufous-tails are more partial to than any other as a food and nesting material it is chicken-weed. They would go all over the weeds, eat what they wanted, then appropriate the remainder for building purposes while it was yet green and, to my mind, unsuitable for such a purpose. The Rufous-tails knew better, however.

Some friends called on 20th July and, of course, were taken round the aviary. I pointed out the box containing, as I thought, the Rufous-tails' eggs, and said they numbered six, but I would show them. On examination the eggs were found to have vanished, and six little pieces of live flesh had taken their place. This reminds me that they do not brood until the clutch is completed, and the young hatch out altogether in consequence. The parents did not seem to mind our interference in the least, and I often turned one or the other of them off the nest to show the broods to subsequent visitors. This is true of all my nesting birds, with the exception of Parrot Finches. The nest soon got very dirty, so I determined on a remedy. Another box, a size larger, was lined for them with clean building material, and made as near a duplicate of the original as human hands could make it. The young were then transferred to it, and put in the same position as the other was taken from. The

parents went on feeding as if nothing had happened, and were, no doubt, very grateful for a change so agreeable and conducive to their greater comfort.

I am sorry no record was taken as to when the young left the nest, but on my first discovering they had made their "entry," I took down the box and found one mite afraid to venture. This one proved to be the delicate one of the family, and I feared the parents had so much to do attending to the five "branchers," that it would be neglected and die. They did not forget it, however, and three days afterwards it helped to swell the crowd. Until lately I could readily identify this weakling from the others. It suffered from diarrhoea, and although the parents kept it alive, they did not appear so solicitous of its welfare as they were of the more robust members of their family; but then it moped, and did not importune them so incessantly as they. I have frequently witnessed it, while sitting with its head buried among its feathers, being gently pecked by a parent: round would come the little head, and as speedily disappear. Off the parent would pop, as if to say, "If you do not wish anything I know five little birds that do."

The sound emitted by the young, when beseeching to be fed, is shrill and clear, and can be heard quite a distance away; distinct from the husky sound of young Gouldians, for example.

The third clutch, numbering three, was discovered and removed from among the young at the time they were transferred into the clean nest box.

Towards the end of August the nights became cold, and I noticed there was something amiss with the hen. Egg-binding was suspected, and found to be the trouble. After treatment a shell-less egg was laid. I took the hint, and placed her in a cage indoors, for good, as I intended at the time; but the weather took a warm turn, and although I hope she will not go to nest again this year, I could not resist the wish to see them again a united family, so let her fly.

My pair has had ample opportunity, during the season, to indulge in the evil to which the species is said to be addicted, namely, egg-eating. Eggs broken by accident have been allowed to remain for days on exposed places in the aviary, without being disturbed.

When the young leave the nest they resemble in general appearance the Silverbill, with the exception of that part of the plumage from which they take their name. The top side of the

tail is always red, and at once proclaims their identity, although in no other respect do they resemble their parents. While Parrot and Gouldian Finches leave the nest with beads on each side of the gape, the Rufous-tails do not; but they have their peculiarity, which consists of a portion of the lower mandible at the base being white, similar to the Scarlet Tanager, but less even in proportion. My wife says she observed this white portion split when the young gaped to be fed, and unless she is mistaken, both mandibles must be coloured, in which case the upper to a much less extent than the lower. This white portion gradually faded, and on 7th September had entirely disappeared. White spots had made their appearance on 26th August, a few red on 29th August, and one young cock at least was noticed to be singing on 31st August.

As I did not feel equal to describing their plumage accurately, outside aid was sought, and I must consider myself extremely lucky to have such a member as Mr. Jas. F. Dewar so near. On 11th September the family of eight were put into a small show-cage the better for observation, and conveyed thither. Mr. Dewar's description of the young is as follows:—Back and wings drab, breast fawn, lighter over abdomen to covert feathers of tail, under side of tail dark brown, top side rusty red, upper mandible dark brown, under mandible lighter towards the base and beginning to show pink, legs and feet dark flesh; five showing white spots, two red spots quite distinctly, three slightly; eye dark centre with brown ring giving it the appearance of being larger than that of the parents'. Mr. Dewar also hazards the opinion that the brood is made up of four hens and two cocks.

They apparently reach maturity at an early age, as on the 9th September, we observed from a window overlooking the outdoor part of the aviary, a very amusing sight. A young cock with a piece of fibre quite eight inches long in his bill, was seen to sidle up to another of the brood—presumably a hen—turn his head and tail to one side, perform a ridiculous love-dance, singing the while exactly as does the Cordon-bleu under the same circumstances, and enough to make his father green with envy. Nor does their precocity end here. They are always the first to investigate the soft-food vessel, and when the bath is introduced the other inmates of their abode have to give place and play the part of spectator until the ablutions of the all-important Rufous-tails are completed. Young Gouldians are certainly very wise, but since the Rufous-tails have come on the scene they (the Gouldians) must take a seat far back.

In the matter of food there was nothing special supplied. Seeds (white and French millet), a simple soft-food mixture, no mealworms; groundsel, shepherd's purse, and other green food intermittingly; but, as already stated, chicken-weed is the Rufous-tails' little weakness.

## THE MALABAR GREEN FRUITSUCKER.

(*Chloropsis malabaricus*).

By the REV. C. D. FARRAR.

This is a very rare bird and but seldom imported, and then only by two's and three's. They are consequently very expensive, and only within the reach of the rich or reckless. I am, unfortunately, only one of the latter.

Some months since a friend of mine in the Indian trade wrote and told me that he was bringing home a pair of Green Fruitsuckers, would I like them? Careful readers of the "Avicultural Magazine" will not need to be told how I answered that letter. The birds on arrival were in very fair condition for soft bills after a long voyage; and I was highly delighted with my new venture. They were marvellously tame and would sit quite unconcernedly on my finger and let me stroke them without any symptom of fear. I at once put them into a big roomy cage and proceeded to attend to their wants. Their feathers were a bit sticky and messed up by the mixture they had been fed on; so I let them have a good tub, and they were soon busy preening their feathers. The food bill was a bit of a difficulty, as such expensive birds can't be played with. At first I gave them my own soft mixture and banana; they did very well on this; but the expense was prohibitive as we can only get bananas once a week at Leeds; so I set about finding some cheaper substitute. I finally settled on plain boiled rice, steamed perfectly dry; so that every grain is separate. They would not eat a "stodgy" mess. Beside the rice, I gave them a pot of stewed apple nicely sweetened with sugar, and they are a pair of perfect beauties; every feather in place and as tight as wax. For those who have never seen the Green Bulbul, I append a description that will fairly make them break the 10th Commandment, though at the same time I am bound to admit, as Shakspeare said of someone else, "As for her state it beggared all description."

The cock is a glorious fellow, a beautiful grass green in colour, the face round the eye, chin and throat a velvety black;

a shining hyacinthine blue stripe on the cheek; the forehead bright gold, shading into the green of the crown; the wings green with just a suspicion of turquoise blue on the shoulder butts; the flights brown; tail, greenish black, tipped with greenish grey; bill, black and long and curved slightly; feet, lead colour; iris, brown.

The hen is considerably smaller, and of a different shade of green impossible to describe, but easy to see in the actual specimen; but she has certainly not got a *green* forehead, as asserted by Dr. Butler, but a yellow one, a little duller perhaps and slightly narrower than her mate's. It is perfectly easy to tell if you have a pair by their actions; as two cocks would act precisely like the celebrated cats of Kilkenny—they would kill each other. The hen is so very seldom imported that it is quite likely that Dr. Butler has never seen one (a).

Another certain sign of sex is the beautiful and varied song of the cock; those who have not had the pleasure of hearing him, have no idea of the extent of his power. The hen only utters a harsh scolding note.

The Green Bulbuls are bright active birds and very amusing to watch. Mine are now in a good-sized indoor aviary where they will remain all the winter; and in the spring, if all goes well, they will be turned out to take their luck, and maybe to reproduce their kind.

I daily give the Fruitsuckers some mealworms, and they are very keen after them. They have long prehensile tongues, very much like the Australian Honeyeaters, and they use them in the same way.

They are gentle inoffensive birds, and I don't think they could hurt a good able bodied bluebottle, unless they ate him.

Let me end with a little story. Some years ago a dealer had about three of these Green Bulbuls in stock, very fine and healthy; a rival dealer had *none*; but not to be bested, as we say up here, what do you think he did? He inserted an advertisement in all the papers: "Green Bulbuls—fine—30/- each; don't

---

(a). Mr. Farrar is correct in stating that the forehead is not green; but I should not call it yellow, but rather dull orange. When I wrote my description I had no hen before me, so referred to Jerdon's Birds of India: I have however seen the hen. In the Calcutta market this bird is by no means rare; and can be purchased there, I believe, for about one rupee. Some years ago our friend Mr. Housden brought me several of these birds (I forget whether three or five) at a reasonable price; but I was not flush of money at the time, and (not being 'reckless') restrained the longing which assailed me to possess one. *Chloropsis malabaricus* is not accounted a specially rare bird, even in the British Bird-market.—A.G.B.

Five were offered me the other day at 30/- each.—R.P.

pay any more." Need I say that when the other unfortunate dealer asked *considerably* more for his genuine birds, he was regarded by the unenlightened public in the light of a barefaced swindler, and the other as a benefactor who had put the public on their guard!

## RANDOM PARAGRAPHS.

By Mrs. LESLIE WILLIAMS.

### I.

My Gouldian Finches—the blackheads—are a merry little pair, in the pink and polished wax of condition, and well supplied with pounded egg-shell, cuttle bone, sand, little stones, and all the etceteras in the way of grass seed and so on that the heart of a Grass-finch ought to be able to desire. Nevertheless, Mrs. Gould managed to become egg-bound the other day, to my horror, for I remembered how fatal this hateful occurrence is said to be to these birds. In the morning she was jerking her tail and scuttering in the sand on the floor: I steamed her and applied a drop of olive oil with a camel's hair pencil: in the afternoon she was rather worse, and I repeated the process more elaborately. When returned to the cage she went to her nest and I had great hopes. But at 10 p.m., she was much worse, and the parts were beginning to look discoloured. I thought—this is kill or cure. I had (of course) none of my bird books at hand; they were all out visiting; and the only help obtainable was from Russ's Parrot book, wherein he says "Break the egg and press it out." Now I felt sure someone else—several of them—said this would kill the bird, but I considered that it *was* kill or cure, and also that in treating mammals it is a good practice to remove the obstructing body piecemeal provided no injury or abrasion is inflicted on the mucous membrane of the passage. I covered the head of a common black pin (there was no virtue in its being black that I know of, but it came first to hand) with boracic ointment, introduced it with extreme gentleness and care, and felt the egg about  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an inch up. Having lubricated the passage by this means, I removed and turned the pin, and in fear and trembling reinserted it point forwards and punctured the shell. I did not attempt the "press it out." Three minutes afterwards the egg was laid, and *what* a supper that bird ate! She was perfectly fey with delight at getting rid of her pain, poor mite. Did I do right, or was it only by great good luck that my bungling effort succeeded? I have had a good deal of experience in the parallel troubles of little dogs, but an atom of Mrs. Gould's



size is a different thing altogether, and in previous cases I have never ventured to operate thus.

## II.

Have you heard the Long-tailed Grass-finch call for his early tea in the morning? It was quite ludicrous when I had one of these little birds in my bedroom for a few days to hear him begin about the time when the servants were stirring—"Tea-ee-ee! Tea-ee-ee!!" long clear calls one after the other, exactly as if he wished to share in our matutinal beverage.

## III.

If Parrots were only not so mischievous they would be so much more amusing kept loose than in cages. My young Double-fronted Amazon, that I brought from Jamaica, is the most restless, worrying baby you can imagine, always in mischief. I am thinking of getting him a nurse, and I am sure going out in a perambulator would give him the greatest possible delight. He is never still for an instant except when shut up in his cage, and if that confinement lasts too long he mopes. Anything bright attracts his attention at once, and he has snatched and more or less broken with his dreadful white bill all the articles of jewellery I habitually wear. He has cracked the pearls on my chain, and broken two bracelets, and tries his very best to spoil my rings, always grabbing at the stones when he gets a chance. I may do anything with him, although he now and then gives me a shrewd nip, but my husband he hates (and all other men) watches his opportunity, and gives them a vicious, twisting pinch. He tumbles about like a kitten in my lap, and spends much time teasing the unlucky maid who may be peeling apples or otherwise getting food ready in the kitchen, where I send him to recreate, since there is less there for him to destroy than elsewhere in the house. He laughs and cries like a whole family of nigger babies, reproduces all the noises he can collect, especially the vulgar voices and expressions of any low class people such as go by outside on a bank holiday or on Sundays, uses the usual Pretty Polly and Hullo vocabulary freely in lots of different voices, and shows off with great pride a quantity of the worst possible Spanish swears he acquired from an accomplished lilac and green individual on board ship. This latter must certainly have gone through the Cuban war.

## IV.

My hen Alexandrine is the least mischievous of the parrots. You might suppose the quiet Eclectus, sitting so primly

inside or on the top of his cage, speaking in such a sweet little soft voice and kissing so affectionately and daintily with the gentlest touch of his big bill, to be exempt from the failing, but if you look you will see a whole box of matches fragmentarily adorning the tray of his abode. He filched them from the corner of the mantelpiece just now while I was out of the room, and when I returned, pretended he couldn't imagine how it happened. But Polly Alexander will sit all day quite good upon her stand, to which she is not chained. At tea time she orders a lump of sugar and a piece of cake, dipping the former in her water and licking it in a delightfully intelligent way. Her only vocal accomplishment is then displayed, "T'chik, t'chik, t'chik (as to a horse but louder) kiss, KISS, KISS!" About 9.30 p.m. she flaps her wings and sails across the room, alighting without discrimination and equally without dignity—usually in a bunch between something and the wall. This aerial display alarms my husband extremely, the more so as she always appears to be steering for his head. He had the pleasure of removing her from the travelling cage when she arrived, when, in spite of the thickest of driving gloves, she left her mark upon him, and has borne him the grudge of the injurer ever since.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### LETTERS ON THE BIRDS OF JAMAICA.

#### No. II.

SIR,—Since writing before, I have learnt a little more about the Jamaica birds, partly by observation and partly by a visit to the Museum in Kingston, where there is a fairly complete collection, some of them vilely, and others tolerably well stuffed. At Port Antonio, where the hotel is built on a hill, sloping down by grassy banks, covered with cultivated trees and splendidly coloured crotons, to the lovely harbour, there were a few birds, which were fairly tame and which we could watch from the verandah. A pair of Banana Quits had a nest in an acacia. It was an untidy heaped mass of hay-like fibres, swung at the end of a branch, and while we were there they apparently brought off the young ones, though we did not see the latter. The Banana Quit is a little bird, about the size of a Blue Tit, greenish olive in colour, with smart yellow cheeks, and altogether a showy little thing; just the same size is the quiet looking Grass Quit of which there are two species, the yellow-faced, *Phonipara olivacea*, which in the absence of the authority for reference, I take it is Gosse's Olive Finch, and the black-faced *P. marchii* (b). The Banana Bird is quite different to the Banana Quit, and is a handsome thing, with a good deal of black and yellow about it, and nearly as large as a (c) Thrush (*Icterus leucopteryx*).

---

(b). The Dusky Finch.—R.P.

(c). The Jamaica Hangnest.—R.P.

The Green Tody (*Todus viridis*) the Robin of Jamaica, is not in the least like a Robin, but is a little Finch no bigger than the Grass Quit, of a bright grass green with a red throat, very gay and striking—quite the brightest-coloured of the native birds other than Parrakeets.

I have made arrangements to have some of the following birds sent to me, but doing so was a matter of great difficulty, as it was almost impossible to find anyone who would undertake to catch and ship them. Whether or not they will reach me safely remains to be seen.

Ground Doves (*Chamæpelia passerina*) little grey things, very pretty—Banana Birds; Grass Quits; Banana Quits; Woodpecker Quits; Green Tody; Blue Quit (*Euphonia jamaica*).

I have managed to secure a couple of Parrots, one a Jamaica Amazon (*Chrysotis collaria*?) of which, so far as I can make out, there are two indigenous species, one with a black bill and one with a white, the latter being considered by the natives the better talker (*d*). The white-billed bird has blue wings and a red tail, and is otherwise all green. The black-billed bird has two curious black spots on its cheeks, blue flights, a little red on the shoulders, and a tint of dark peacock blue about the forehead. Both are small birds, hardly larger than a Blackbird, and the general plumage is very rich dark green. My other Parrot is merely an imported Double-fronted Amazon from one of twelve brought by a super-cargo of an American Fruit Steamer, residing in Port Antonio. He lost nine out of the dozen by poisoning: they got loose in his garden and ate something which incontinently finished them off. This bird is a good talker, but I could have bought it just as well in England. It cost ten dollars; the freightage is nil for birds with passengers on the home-bound steamers, but it is the proper thing to give somebody a tip on their behalf. Several Parrots on board are looked after—*tant bien que mal*—by various stewards, who generally omit to clean them out, but feed them liberally enough, put them out on the sunny after-deck in the daytime and take them in at night. Mine have cosy quarters in the barber's shop, whence I fetch them every morning, tidy them up, and take them an outing, and I shall give the barber 5/- each for his kind accommodation, which sum is about that paid by the other proprietors to their deputies.

In Port Antonio, I picked up for five dollars, a lovely little bird, which I will not attempt to name, as I have never kept any of the Tanager or Sugar Birds and fancy it belongs to one or other family. It is the size of the long-tailed Humming Bird, of Jamaica, and has a similar beak. Its general colour is in several shades of bright royal blue, the head capped with exquisite turquoise, short erectile feathers, put up like those of the Saffron Finch when it receives attention, of which it is very fond. The wings have a bar of bright yellow, and are yellow underneath, the feet and legs are orange and waxen, and the toenails black. This exquisite sprite lives on banana, of which he consumes a vast amount, getting through about one third of a large banana in one day. He will not touch any other fruit, and never goes on the floor of the cage. He is perfectly steady, and in show plumage. Our members would, I am sure, be amused if they could see the cage enshrining this fragile jewel. I bought him in a crazy erection of split cane, hailing, I fancy, from India, though he himself was said to have come from S. America, and when we got to Kingston I went

(*d*). *Chrysotis collaria* and *C. agilis*.—D. S.-S.

to the best ironmonger in the town to seek for a boxcage, more calculated for his due protection. No such a thing, I was told, could be got; but they could make a cage in every way suitable. The price was not ruinous—3/—but the completed article I will dispose of to any member who wishes to confine a wild squirrel or a pair of rats, under the sure conviction that he will find it suitable! It resembles in shape a small dog-kennel, is made of thick match-boarding, and has perches an inch in diameter, with a curious door on the guillotine principle, despite all which it has served its purpose.

I longed to stay in Jamaica in order to set up an outdoor aviary of Australian Finches and another of Parrakeets (this was my only reason for wishing to expatriate myself, as in many respects, mosquitoes and Creole food especially, I thought the place utterly detestable) for the climatic conditions are absolutely perfect for such purposes.

Yet, at home, where the trouble involved is great, we are enthusiastic in our pursuit of aviculture, while out there scarcely a soul takes the slightest interest in birds of any kind.

M. L. WILLIAMS.

---

### NO. III.

Since I brought the little "Blue Bird," of which I wrote in my last, home, I find that I was not quite accurate in my description of him; and I have also identified him, and should like you to tell me, if you will be so kind, whether he is not rather a rare importation, and what is his value? What I supposed to be very dark blue on his back is (I now see in a good light) black: the black markings are very clearly defined: the top of the head is an exquisite turquoise, under the wings is custard colour, the legs and feet are orange red: the shape like a Wren (but he is double the size), the tail rather cocked: the plumage silken, exquisitely tight and smart: he is the Sai, or Blue Cæreba, of South America. Vide p. 3, vol. 3, of the "Book of Birds" (Dr. Brehm and J. Jones) where he is figured. But this bird has a black beak, whereas the statement there is that the beak is yellow. Since I got him home I find he will eat plenty of things besides banana, which has, however, been his only food, unless he ate the ants and little flies which in Jamaica come upon any fruit left about. He eats wasp grubs greedily, and green caterpillars, also ants' eggs, and mealworms, but is not keen on these latter. He will not touch egg or any farinaceous substance. I see Brehm says "seeds, fruit and insects," so I will try him with seeds in variety. He is a most lovely creature: I wish I could get a hen for him, as I believe these are very gregarious birds.

M. L. WILLIAMS.

P.S.—He never goes on the ground if he can help it, but is intensely active, though very tame and steady.

---

### PIGEON AILING.

SIR,—I shall be much obliged if you will kindly advise me as to how to treat a Triangular Spotted Pigeon, I have had the bird for some time, and it has always seemed strong and healthy until a few weeks ago, when it began to get lame. I do not think the feet are injured in any way, but they have entirely lost colour—and from being dark pink are now almost white; the same change has taken place in the bird's legs.

A short time ago the colour seemed coming back, and the bird appeared rather better, but it is now as bad as ever again.

The Pigeon passes most of the day nesting amongst some straw on a shelf. It seems disinclined to walk, and when it does it goes down heavily at one side.

I think the bird must be out of health as I have noticed the excreta are liquid (but not transparent) and of a dull yellow-green colour. The Pigeon is in a large aviary, but it is sometimes rather damp, and does not get much sun. Would you advise me to move the bird? It is very nervous, and the slightest attempt to catch it distresses it very much.

R. ALDERSON.

---

*The following reply was sent to Miss Anderson :*

My idea from your description is that the Pigeon is failing from want of sun and warmth. I should put it in the driest and most sunny aviary you have.

I have seen a great many of the species breeding freely in Continental Zoos, from which I gathered that they are not generally delicate. All the Pigeon tribe are the better for having rock salt at hand.

O. E. CRESSWELL.

---

#### DEATH FROM BRAIN DISEASE.

SIR,—I should be very much obliged if you would kindly tell me what you think the Mannikin I send herewith died from. I have had a pair of them nearly a month, and they are in a very large cage, with some other small foreign birds—a Virginian Nightingale and a Java Sparrow. It seemed perfectly well, until yesterday, when it sat with its head under its wing a good deal. About 7.30, I looked at the birds and this one was down at the bottom of the cage, swaying its head about in an odd way. I took it out and gave it some water and a few drops of sherry which I thought might revive it, and put it back. It tried to fly upon the perches but fell heavily on its head. I took it out again and gave it a little water but again it fell down on its head; before it tried to fly up, seemed to turn about as it it were having a fit. I then put it into a very small cage and it sat on the perch all right. I looked at it at 10, and it seemed more or less all right, but this morning I found it dead. I cannot understand the reason of its dying like this, and should be very grateful if you would kindly tell me, and I should know perhaps how to prevent another death of the same sort. Foreign birds are so unsatisfactory often, for they seem to die from no reason, however much care is lavished on them. Would you also tell me whether there is any chance of any of my birds nesting. I have Bronze-headed Mannikins, Zebra Finches, Avadavats, and the enclosed sort of Black-headed Mannikins. The cage is a wire-fronted one, wood all round; It is 4ft. long, 3ft. high, and 2ft. broad. I have put in two of those little grass nests. The cage stands in a cool conservatory.

I must apologise for giving you so much trouble.

LILLA DE YARBURGH BATESON.

---

*The following reply was sent to the Honble. Miss Bateson :*

The bird arrived in too advanced a state of decomposition to be

forwarded to me : but the symptoms point to a disease of the brain which is not rare among the Ornamental Finches : it is probably due to a bacillus which enters the brain through the eye.

It is frequently the case that inflammation of one eye accompanies the brain trouble ; then the bird aggravates the disease by rubbing its eye in the sand, so that I have known it to become so inflamed and corroded that I had to kill the sufferer to end its torment.

A. G. BUTLER.

#### THE SAI, OR BLUE COEREBA.

SIR,—In reply to Mrs. N. L. Williams' enquiries, the Yellow-winged Blue-Creeper, *Coereba cyanea* (usually Coereba, rarely Caereba), is not common in this country, but can hardly be described as especially rare. It may be seen not infrequently in the Parrot House at the Zoo; and I can remember having seen it at not less than one Bird Show—on one solitary occasion (at the Aquarium) I think there was a pair. On some two or three occasions, if I mistake not, the species has been offered to me in London, usually at £3 each, which perhaps may be regarded as *about* its market value. But it is one thing to *want* a bird, quite another to want to *sell* it.

In its wild state, it feeds largely on the tiniest insects found on the foliage of trees and shrubs. The green fly of our own gardens should suit it admirably.

REGINALD PHILLIPPS.

#### THE IDENTIFICATION OF BIRD.

SIR—In the year 1894 I purchased at my door, from itinerant bird-fanciers, two beautiful scarlet birds about the size of an ordinary Canary, but with a shorter tail ; breast scarlet—brilliant scarlet—beak black, back brown streaked with brown, black, and red ; eye black with rim of black. I am told it is of the Bishop tribe.

But there are many sorts of Bishops, and I should like to know the name of this bird and also to buy another, for one of mine died this year. I should be much obliged for an answer and enclose a stamped envelope.

M. B. PITT.

*The following reply was sent to Mrs. Pitt.*

The bird is undoubtedly the Madagascar Weaver. At this time of year it is often to be obtained very cheaply, more especially if not in full colour.

A. G. BUTLER.

#### QUERY ABOUT VIRGINIAN NIGHTINGALES.

SIR,—Will any of your readers give their experience of how to rear Virginian Nightingales, and the best way to treat them, as I have been unlucky in my first attempt.

I bought two birds ; the cock in the spring, and the hen in August. They at once paired, and she laid two eggs in a Hartz Mountain cage under the glass in the outside aviary. On Thursday, August 30th, I found two young ones, and so gave plenty of egg food. I had to pass the hen to feed

the birds daily, but she did not mind, and when she had young she did not leave the nest. The cock fed too, but on Sept. 2nd I found one young one thrown out, and pecked: it was rather thin. The other birds in the aviary ate the mealworms so quickly, so I put some near the nest in a little tin, and they both fed the young ones on them; but next morning, Sept. 5th, at 8 a.m., as I did not see the hen on, I went and looked; and after seeing the nest empty, found the young one away from the nest—dead. It was fat and healthy, and only had one peck in its side.

The birds had green peas, oatmeal, ants' eggs, hard-boiled egg; seed (crushed hemp, sunflower seed) to eat. The hen fed the young one on the egg food, which is mixed with Spratt's fine biscuit meal, and soaked ants' eggs. They are in a mixed aviary.

I think, this spring, that the cock Virginian must have thrown some young Bullfinches out of their nest, because I kept picking them up and putting them back the first week: and then the hen sat so tight she crushed them in both nests, and last year she reared seven. I can put the Cardinals next year in another aviary, but I should like to know what birds to put with them. They are very quiet.

M. C. HAWKE.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF PIGEON; QUERIES ABOUT KESTRELS.

SIR,—I saw some curious foreign Pigeons in Mr. Green's shop last month. He told me they were sent him by a lady, along with some other Doves (Turtles and Indian Greenwing), but that he did not know from what country they came, nor whether they were a domestic variety or a wild species. I send you the following description of them, hoping that it may enable you to identify them. Head, large and coarse; neck, thick; plumage, dark slaty gray on head, back and breast, light ashy blue on the rump, and dusky brown mottled with lightish yellow on the wings.

I should also be greatly obliged if you would kindly give me information on the following points, *re* Kestrels. (1) How to distinguish the sexes in adult and also young birds, and at what age do they assume adult plumage? (2) When is their nesting season, how many eggs do they lay, and how long is their period of incubation? (3) What is the best food for them, and how much is required by old birds and also by young when they leave the nest and commence feeding themselves. (4) At what age do the young leave the nest and commence feeding themselves? (5) Am I correct in believing that they are non-migratory, therefore fit to winter in an outdoor aviary without artificial heat? I may add that the one which I have bought from Mr. Green is a last year's bird; and that I have bought it, not for hawking, but to keep down the rats in my aviaries, and to show and to breed from: so I should imagine it would require less care to keep it in good health flying loose in an aviary, than if it were leading the unnatural life of a trained Hawk.

CHAS. CUSHNY.

*The following replies were sent to Mr. Cushny.*

I regret that I am quite unable to identify the Pigeon from your description. Further particulars, with measurements, might possibly enable me to do so.

O. E. CRESSWELL.

In reply to your queries *re* Kestrels—(1) The sexes in the adults may be distinguished by the male having a slaty blue tail with one dark bar, and the female a reddish tail with many dark bars; in the young the sexes are practically alike, and the tails as in the adult female; there is, however, a trace of the slate colour at the base of the tail in the young males. (2) They nest in May, and lay five or six eggs which are hatched after 19 days incubation. (3) The best food is small birds and mice, but they live well on raw lean beef and require a piece about the size of a Sparrow *per diem*: if possible they should have birds or mice once a week, and have nothing on the following day: young and old should be fed much alike. (4) The young leave the nest at about six weeks of age, and in a cage can feed themselves when about a month old, but in a wild state the parents probably catch their food for a much longer period, long after they have left the nest and are flying. (5) The Kestrel, living in England all the year round, will do perfectly well in an unheated aviary, but, in my opinion, do better both in Summer and Winter in an outdoor aviary with a covered roof than in one in which they are exposed to the rain and weather; according to my experience all raptorial birds are very susceptible to cold when in captivity, and do much better in a covered-in aviary.

I am afraid the Kestrel will not keep down rats except young ones, but is, nevertheless, a most delightful bird in captivity. The best protection against rats in an aviary is an owl, either Barn or Tawny; but as they move about at night they cannot be allowed in an aviary with small birds.

J. L. BONHOTÉ.

#### ENQUIRY—RUSSIAN BIRDS.

SIR,—Can you tell me if there are any birds in South and South-East Russia which would make interesting inmates of an aviary? I have some friends living there, and they have offered to send me some birds of which they speak very highly; but they know nothing of their habits, or whether seed-eaters or insectivorous. One bird they call a Blue Crow, and the others are purely Russian words which do not convey any meaning to me.

If you can in any way help me to tell my friends what to send, and how to feed when caught and *en route*, I should be very much obliged indeed. I am a young recruit in the avicultural world, and have only just touched the ordinary everyday birds. I have bred Javas, Parson Finches, Cockatiels, Zebra Finches, Yellow and Green Budgerigars, and have about 130 birds in four aviaries.

J. J. MUMFORD.

#### RUFIOUS-TAILED GRASSFINCHES.

SIR,—I have had under observation to-day a nest of Rufous-tailed Grassfinches, and found four of the six feeding themselves. Do you know of any other member having been successful with this species at an earlier date?

I have also a flock of Long-tailed Grassfinches (cannot count the exact number), ten Goulds, a Cordon-bleu, and a Double-band.

ALF. E. NICHOLSON.



*The following reply was sent to Mr. Nicholson.*

You have certainly been most successful with your Grassfinches this summer, and I believe you are the first to breed *Bathilda ruficauda*—*successfully*—in this country, although young have been reared on several occasions in France. I can find no previous record of young Rufous-tails being reared so far as to be able to feed themselves, in Great Britain, although in 1897 a pair nested in the grass in Mr. St. Quentin's aviary and two young birds left the nest, but perished from exposure one cold night, two or three days after (see Vol. V. p. 97). I have had nests built and eggs laid by this species in my own aviary, but my pair were (or possibly one only was) addicted to a habit which seems common to these birds, namely, egg-eating, so that I was quite unsuccessful in my attempts to propagate the species. You are to be heartily congratulated upon your success: six is a splendid brood.

May I ask that you will give the readers of the "Avicultural Magazine" a fuller account of your success?—How the nest was built, its position, on what the young were fed, etc.

You have also been unusually successful with the Long-tails and Goulds.

D. SETH-SMITH.

## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1900-1901.

The total membership for this year shows a slight decrease as compared with last year, the total number being 254 ; the increase of subscription will probably account for the decrease ; but there must still be plenty of aviculturists who are not yet members, and we hope all present members will do their best to make more widely known the objects of the Society, and bring recruits to its ranks.

The small amount of deficit, £4—which still remained at the end of last year—was wiped off through the kindness of several members. There was, however, a small deficit on last year's account, which will be easily met with the increased subscription, and we shall hope to start our next year with a balance in hand.

Volume VII. will not be quite as bulky as last year's volume, which was by far the largest issued, but with that exception it will probably consist of more pages than any of the preceding volumes, and the Council hope that the matter contained therein may have proved as interesting and useful as hitherto.

Two coloured plates only have been issued during the year ; this has not been owing to lack of funds but because it is found more economical to print four plates on one stone. The two other plates, therefore, which should have been issued this year, have been held back for that reason, and we hope to issue six plates before October, 1902. The first two *illustrated* numbers of Vol. VIII. will be forwarded post free to all paid up members of the past, whether continuing as members for the ensuing year or not.

A full-page photograph of some Cranes has been issued during the year ; the Council had hoped to issue more photographs of members' aviaries and birds, but lack of material has prevented the idea from being carried out.

The end of this year will again see changes in the staff of the Magazine. Mr. CRESSWELL, your Editor, is obliged on account

of ill-health to resign the editorship. Arrangements with regard to his successor are not yet made \*, and we fear it may be a difficult matter to find a worthy substitute, as editorial labours are by no means light or easy. In accepting with regret his resignation we tender him our best thanks, and trust that he will long remain an active member and contribute to our Magazine.

At the end of this year also we lose as member, our founder, Mr. H. R. FILLMER, who for five years practically ran the Magazine, and nursed it with assiduous care during the early days of its infancy. The labour involved in such an undertaking can only be thoroughly appreciated by those who are following in his footsteps, and we notice with great regret that Mr. FILLMER now wishes to sever his connection with us.

Our thanks are due to those members—and we are glad to notice several new contributors—who have filled the pages of the Magazine with their avicultural experiences, and also to those gentlemen who have kindly placed at our disposal drawings or photographs for reproduction; but especially are our thanks owed to those Officers of the Society and Members of the Executive Committee, who have discharged their duties to the best of their ability and for the furtherance of the Society's interest.

*(Signed),*

O. E. CRESSWELL,	HENRY J. FULLJAMES,
A. G. BUTLER,	ROSIE ALDERSON,
D. SETH-SMITH,	JOHN SERGEANT,
R. PHILLIPPS,	W. L. PAGE,
W. H. ST. QUINTIN,	J. L. BONHOTE.
C. D. FARRAR.	

---

\* Since the above was written Mr. SETH-SMITH has kindly undertaken to carry on Editorial duties.—J. L. B.

# INDEX TO SUBJECTS.

	PAGE
Accidents ...	55, 82, 118
<i>Aegintha phaeton</i> ...	7
<i>picta</i> ...	1, 7
African Fire-finch ...	31
Amazon, Active ...	212, 228
August ...	109
Blue-faced ...	111
Bouqueti's ...	109
Double-fronted ...	226, 228
Guiding's ...	109
Red-throated ...	212, 228
Sallé's ...	212
American Bunting ...	108
Cat-bird ...	107
Goldfinch ...	107
Amherst's Pheasants ...	106
Andaman Starling ...	192, 198
Apostle Bird ...	146
Arched Sparrow ...	165, 215
Australian Bower-birds ...	69
Fire-finch ...	7
Aviary for Weavers ...	20, 58
My ...	135
Outdoor ...	49, 53, 86, 135, 152
Notes ...	49
Avicultural Notes ...	81, 143
Baldness in Birds ...	161
Baltimore Hangnest ...	107
Banana-bird ...	227
Banana Quit ...	227
Barbary Turtle, A Tame ...	44
Barbet, Blue-cheeked ...	26, 140
Great ...	168
Indian Green ...	168
Bell-bird, Naked-throated ...	124, 137
Bichen'o's ...	30
"Bird Lore" ...	69
Bird Notes at the Paris Exhibition ...	33
Birdroom in Winter ...	87
Birdroom Top Lights ...	86
Bishop, Napoleon ...	143
Orange ...	143
Black Redstart ...	96
Blue-Creeper, Yellow-winged ...	229, 231
Blue-Pie, Chinese ...	55, 56
Himalayan ...	56
Bower-bird, Golden ...	70, 138
Regent ...	70, 99, 138, 160
Satin ...	7, 69, 123, 136, 148
Spotted ...	69
Brain Disease ...	230
Breeding Experiences in 1900:—	
Rev. C. D. Farrar ...	42
Mr. L. W. Hawkins ...	29
Mr. F. W. Oates ...	41
Mr. W. H. St. Quintin ...	73
Breeding Gouldian Finches ...	103
British Birds at the Palace ...	99
Bullfinch, Russian, Illness of ...	42
Bunting, Brown-headed ...	61
Indigo ...	156, 199
Nonpareil ...	143, 173, 199
Red-backed ...	57
Red-headed ...	175
Cape Canary ...	172
Cape Sparrow ...	165, 215
Cat-bird, American ...	107
Catching Birds in Aviary ...	59, 142
Chinese Spectacle Thrush ...	71
Chough ...	22
<i>Chrysotis agilis</i> ...	212, 228
<i>augusta</i> ...	109
<i>bouqueti</i> ...	109
<i>collaris</i> ...	212, 228

	PAGE
<i>Chrysotis guildingi</i> ...	109
<i>leucillantis</i> ...	226, 228
<i>ventralis</i> ...	212
<i>versicolor</i> ...	111
Cockatiel ...	116
Cockatoo, Leadbeater's ...	174, 191
Solomon Island ...	92
Cocks of the Rock ...	36
Coereba, Blue ...	229, 231
Conure, Black-headed ...	85, 215
Golden-crowned ...	216
Half-moon ...	216
Orange-fronted ...	215
Petz's ...	216
Yellow-fronted ...	215
Conures killing their Young ...	215
Cordon Bleu ...	52, 115
Cotton Teal ...	129
Covering Cages a Mistake ...	19
Craue, Australian ...	66
Common ...	68
Demoiselle ...	68, 89, 144
Manchurian ...	67
"Native Companion" ...	66
Sarus ...	68
Siberian ...	67
Wattled ...	65
White ...	67
White-necked ...	65
Cranes in Captivity ...	65
Crescent Sparrow ...	165, 215
Crimson Wing sick ...	125
Cuba Finch ...	29
Cuban Linnet ...	108
Cuckoo ...	56
African ...	84
Black ...	146, 162
Diederic or Didric ...	165
Indian ...	146, 162
<i>Dacnis cayana</i> ...	144
Dayal ...	149
Demoiselle Crikes ...	89, 144
Dhyal-bird ...	85, 149
Diuca Finch, Nesting of ...	177
Double-banded Finch ...	30
Dove, Barbary Turtle ...	44
Green-winged ...	159
Ground ...	228
Duck, Baer's Pochard ...	134
Bronze-cap ...	133
Cotton Teal ...	129
Eider ...	74
Gadwall ...	133
Pink-headed ...	132
Tufted ...	114
Ducks, Some Out-of-the-way ...	129
Dufresne's Waxbill ...	43
Duroline ...	50
Eolectus mischievous ...	226
Eolectus nesting ...	125
Egg-binding ...	4, 105, 119
Egg-binding:—A clever operation ...	225
Egg Shells and Egg-eating ...	118
Eggs, Preserved Yolk of ...	81
<i>Emblema picta</i> ...	7
Feather picking ...	147
Finch, African Fire- ...	31
Australian Fire- ...	7
Bichen'o's ...	30
Black-rumped ...	97
Crimson Rose- ...	175
Cuba ...	29
Diuca ...	177

	PAGE		PAGE
Finch, Double-banded ...	30	Macaw, Illiger's... ..	174
" Dusky ...	227	Madeira Aviary-birds ...	52
" Gouldian ...	151	Maggots ...	223
" 1, 63, 64, 82, 103, 127, 143, 163, 213, 225	171	Malabar Green Fruitsucker	13
" Green Singing- ...	57, 170	Malabar Mynah, Breeding of	17, 62, 86, 87
" Grey Singing- ...	26, 45, 82	Management of Small Foreign Birds	153, 154
" Long-tailed Grass- ...	19, 27, 31, 61, 226	in Winter ...	85
" Masked Grass- ...	32, 97	Mannikins ...	167
" Melodious ...	29	Medal, The Society's ...	168
" Olive ...	30, 227	Melanism ...	86, 140, 175
" Painted ...	1	Mice ...	21
" Parrot ...	214	Missel Thrush ...	75
" Parson ...	61	Mistake, A ...	52, 181, 196, 212
" Pectoral ...	98, 128	Mocking-bird ...	185
" Pileated ...	178	<i>Myiophonus borneensis</i> ...	208, 209
" Red-faced ...	2, 84, 97, 146, 161	" <i>ceruleus</i> ...	208
" Rufous-tailed Grass- ...	219, 233	" <i>dicrorhynchus</i> ...	185
" Saffron ...	153	" <i>horsfieldi</i> ...	184, 202
" White-eared Grass- ...	97	" <i>nova guineae</i> ...	184
" Wiener's ...	2, 84, 97, 146, 161	" <i>tamminckii</i> ...	185
		" <i>tibetanus</i> ...	185
Godwit, Black-tailed ...	160	Names of Birds ...	77, 145
Goose Pigmy ...	129	Nanday or Nenday ...	85, 215
Gorgeously-coloured Foreign Cage Birds ...	199	Nesting Boxes ...	85, 122
Gouldians ...	1, 63, 64, 82, 103, 127, 143, 163, 213, 227	Nesting of a Hen Nonpareil ...	173
Grallina, Pied ...	76, 83	Nesting Parrakeet ...	86
Grass Seeds for Birds ...	6, 7	Net dangerous ...	59
Green Avadavats plucking ...	43	Nightingale ...	23
Green Bulbul, Malabar ...	223	Nonpareil ...	143, 173, 199
Green Food ...	120	Change of Plumage of ...	173
Green Oriole ...	207, 211	North American Birds ...	107
Grey Jumper ...	146	Notes from the Zoo ...	167
Grosbeak, Blue ...	98		
" Cardinal ...	231	Odds and Ends ...	118, 136
" Yellow-bellied ...	35	Orchard Hangnest ...	107
Hill-Tit, Red-billed ...	146	Oriole, Green ...	207, 211
Hodgson's Fruitsucker ...	12	Ornamental Waterfowl ...	83, 145
Humming Birds ...	212	Our Joey ...	110
		Outdoor Aviculture, Miscellaneous Experiences of ...	152
Illiger's Macaw ...	174	Owl, Eagle ...	75, 108, 113, 159
Indigo-bird ...	156, 199	" Hawk ...	113
Intelligent Pets ...	113, 147	" Lapp ...	111
		" Little ...	112
Jamaica, Birds of ...	211, 227	" Scops ...	112
" Amazons ...	212, 228	" Snowy ...	74, 113
" Hangnest ...	227	" Tawny ...	111, 162
" Robin ...	228	" Tengmalm's ...	113
" Thrush ...	227	" Ural ...	111
" Toddy ...	228	Owls ...	111
Jamaica, Conveyance of Birds from ...	174, 228		
Jay ...	23, 75	Pagoda Mynah ...	197
Johnny Crow ...	211	Parrakeet, Alexandrine ...	220
Keeping Foreign Birds out-of-doors ...	37, 60, 62	" Crimson-winged ...	125
Kingfisher, Common ...	84	" Golden-shouldered ...	24, 98
Kestrel ...	232	" Grey-breasted ...	86
" Sacred ...	99	" Lineolated ...	24
" White-breasted ...	39	" Masked ...	25, 98, 116
Koel ...	146, 162	" Nanday or Nenday ...	85, 215
L. & P. O. Show ...	21	" Quaker ...	86
Lapping, Wattled ...	207	" Rock Pepler ...	174, 191, 192
Laughing-Thrush, Rufous-chinned ...	162	" Shining ...	23, 25, 98
Lavender Finch ...	26, 45, 82	" Tabuan ...	25, 98
Leadbeater's Cockatoo ...	174, 191	" Tui ...	24
Lights at Night ...	18, 39, 62, 87, 104, 120	Parrot (Amazons) ...	109
<i>Liothrix</i> ...	146	" Grey ...	113, 117, 147, 196
Log Nests ...	85, 122	" Red-sided Eclectus ...	125
Longevity of Parrots ...	42, 196	" Senegal ...	115
Long-tailed Grassfinch ...	19, 27, 31, 61, 226	Parrots, Longevity of ...	42, 196
Lorikeet, Scaly-breasted ...	24	Parrot Finches ...	25, 214
		Parson Finch aggressive ...	61
		<i>Passer arcuatus</i> ...	165
		" <i>luteus</i> ...	167
		Peewit, Black-breasted ...	207
		Pekin Robin ...	1, 146

	PAGE.		PAGE.
<i>Phonipara canora</i> ...	29	Skuis ...	35
<i>lepida</i> ...	30, 227	Soft Eggs ...	4, 105, 119
<i>marchii</i> ...	227	Soft Soap ...	122
<i>olivacea</i> ...	30, 227	Solomon Island Cockatoo ...	92
<i>pusilla</i> ...	30	Sparrow, Black ...	213
Pied Grallina ...	76, 83	Cape ...	165, 215
Pigeon, Bleeding-heart ...	51	Yellow ...	167
Pigeon ailing ...	229	Spectacle Thrush ...	71
Piping Crows ...	76	Stork in England, A ...	196
Pochard, Baer's ...	134	Stoves ...	121
Poison for Mice ...	140	Struthidea ...	75, 146
Pope ...	53, 54	Strychnine ...	140, 175
Pratincole ...	74	Sun-bird, Purple ...	175
Purple Sun-bird ...	175	Swift ...	200
<i>Pyrrhulopsis</i> ...	25		
<i>Pytelia afra</i> ...	2, 84, 97, 146, 161	Tabasco Sauce ...	116
		Tanager, Superb ...	144
Quail, Californian ...	51, 54, 81	Violet ...	144
Chinese ...	155, 157	Tanagers spiteful ...	144
Quit, Banana ...	227	Teal ...	114
Blue ...	228	Cotton ...	129
Grass ...	227	Goose ...	129
Random Paragraphs :—I.—IV. ...	225	Thrush, Rufous-chinned Laughing ...	162
Regent-bird ... 70, 99, 138, 160, 205, 207, 211		Missel ...	21
REVIEWS—		Solitaire ...	212
" My Birds in Freedom and Cap-		Spectacle ...	71
tivity," by the Rev. H. D. Astley	105	Whistling ...	184, 202
" Nests and Eggs of Australian		Tody, Jamaica or Green ...	228
Birds," by Mr. A. J. Campbell...	124	Traps, Bird ...	78, 142
Rock Pepler ...	174, 191, 192	Mouse ...	86, 140, 141
Rock Salt ...	82, 118	Treatment of Small Foreign Birds in	
Roller, Breeding of the ...	217	Winter ...	17, 62, 86, 87
Rosy Pastor ...	52		
		Virginian Nightingales, Nesting of	231
Sai ...	229, 231		
Sand, Sea ...	147, 214	Waxbill, Orange-checked... ..	88
Shell, dangerous ...	147, 214	Pied Grey ...	167
Satin Bower-bird ... 7, 69, 123, 136, 148		Violet-eared ...	84
Seed-eater, Bearded ...	171	Zebra ...	154, 155
St. Helena ...	171	Waxbills, Green Food for ...	43
Sulphur ...	172	Weaver, Madagascar ...	231
White-throated ...	172	Red-headed ...	97
Serin-Pinches, On certain... ..	169	Weavers ...	153, 156, 199
Serin, Grey-necked ...	172	What's in a Name? ...	145, 162
<i>Serinus albigularis</i> ...	172	Whistling-bird, A supposed new	184, 202
<i>canicollis</i> ... ..	172	Blue ...	208, 209
<i>flaviventris</i> ...	171	Himalayan ...	184
<i>icterus</i> ...	171	Horsfield's ...	185
<i>leucopygius</i> ...	170	New Guinea ...	184, 202
<i>sulphuratus</i> ...	172	Temminck's ...	184
<i>Setaria glauca</i> ...	63, 64	Whistling Tom ...	184
Shama ...	20, 118, 144, 147, 149	White-breasted Mannikin ...	98, 128
Shama, The, by Mr. E. W. Harper ...	149	Whydah, Red-collared ...	97
Show, L. and P. O. ...	21	Wintering Foreign Birds out-of-doors	
Palace ...	96, 99, 139	37, 60, 62, 86	
Shows : Improper Removal of Ex-		Woodlarks ...	106
hibits ...	22, 161	Woodpeckers, Spotted ...	96
Sibia, Black-headed ...	76, 145, 162	Wood-Swallow, Masked ...	26, 99
Silky Bower-bird, ...	7, 69, 123, 136, 148	Wryneck ...	22, 96
Silverbills ...	154		
Siva, Blue-winged ...	168	Zosterops ...	157

# INDEX TO NESTING NOTES.

	PAGE
Andaman Starling ...	192
Barraband ...	42
Black Grouse ...	73
Budgerigar ...	136, 233
Cabot's Tragopan ...	73
Cape Sparrow, ...	165, 215
Cardinal, Dominican ...	53
" Virginian ...	54
Cockatoo, Leadbeater's ...	175, 191
" Solomon Island ...	92
Conure, Nanday ...	215
" Orange-fronted ...	215
" Yellow-fronted ...	215
Cordon Bleu ...	233
Demoiselle Crane ...	89
Diamond Sparrow ...	42
Dove, Diamond ...	74
" Green-winged ...	159
" Zebra ...	54
Finch, African Fire- ...	31
" Australian Fire- ...	7
" Bichen's ...	30, 41, 233
" Cherry ...	42
" Cuba ...	29
" Desert ...	51
" Diuca ...	177
" Gouldian ...	50, 103, 127, 155, 233
" Lavender ...	45
" Long-tailed Grass- ...	31, 233
" Masked Grass- ...	32
" Olive ...	30
" Parrot ...	214
" Parson ...	51, 54, 233
" Red-faced ...	33, 161
" Rufous-tailed ...	33, 42, 219, 233
" Saffron ...	19
" Zebra ...	54
Goose, Pink-footed ...	73
" White-fronted ...	73
Green Avadavat ...	42
Grenadier Weaver ...	59
<b>HYBRIDS—</b>	
Chestnut Finch—Bengali ...	98
Golden-shouldered—Many-coloured ...	98
Parrakeets ...	98

	PAGE.
<b>HYBRIDS—continued.</b>	
Grey Singing-finch—Canary ...	170
Parson Finch—Bengali ...	98
Sharp-tailed Finch—Silverbill ...	44
Siskin—Greenfinch ...	135
Indigo-bird ...	42
Jay ...	75
Leadbeater's Cockatoo ...	175, 191
Linnæus ...	136
Madagascar Lovebird ...	41, 51
Malabar Mynah ...	13
Mealy Rosella ...	41
Mocking-bird ...	181
Nonpareil ...	42, 173
Owl, Eagle ...	108
" Snowy ...	74
Pagoda Mynah ...	197
Pennant ...	42
Pigeon, Triangular-spotted ...	230
Pope ...	53
Pratincole ...	74
Quail ...	42
" California ...	51, 54, 81
" Chinese ...	50, 74
Redpoll ...	136
Red-sided Eclectus ...	126
Rock Pepler ...	175, 191, 192
Rufous-tail ...	33, 42, 219, 233
Roller ...	217
Sandgrouse ...	74
Shoveller ...	74
Spectacle Thrush ...	42, 71
Turquoise ...	42
Virginian Nightingale ...	231
Woodlark ...	41
Zebra Waxbill ...	42

## INDEX TO AUTHORS.

	PAGE		PAGE.
<b>ALDERSON, Miss R.</b>		<b>FARRAR, Rev. C. D.</b>	
Nesting of Lavender Finches ...	45	Breeding of the Malabar Mynah ...	42
What Bird? ...	61	Breeding Record for 1900 ...	42
Intelligent Pets ...	113	Chinese Spectacle Thrush ...	71
Nesting of Diuca Finches ...	177	Solomon Island Cockatoo ...	92
<b>ALSTON, GAVIN</b>		The Zosterops ...	157
Amherst's Pheasants; Woodlarks ...	106	Breeding of American Mockingbird ...	181
Cuban Linnet ...	108	Nesting of Andaman Starling ...	192
<b>ASTLEY, Rev. H. D., M.A., F.Z.S.</b>		Successful Breeding of Pagoda Mynah ...	197
Cranes in Captivity ...	65	Malabar Green Fruitsucker ...	223
<b>BARKLEY, Mrs.</b>		<b>FINN, FRANK, B.A., F.Z.S.</b>	
Our Joey ...	116	Some Out-of-the-way Ducks ...	129
<b>BATESON, The Hon. Miss</b>		What's in a Name? ...	145
Death from Brain Disease ...	230	<b>FOULIS, JOHN</b>	
<b>BONHOPE, J. L., B.A., F.Z.S.</b>		The White-breasted Mannikin ...	128
British Birds at the Palace ...	99	<b>FRANKLIN-HINDLE, R.</b>	
Black-tailed Godwit ...	100	Birds not yet bred in captivity ...	85
<b>BUTLER, A. G., Ph.D., &amp;c.</b>		<b>GOODFELLOW, WALTER</b>	
Satin Bower-bird ...	7	Bird Notes at the Paris Exhibition ...	33
Effective Simple Bird Traps ...	78	<b>GOSLING, Mrs.</b>	
On Certain Serin-finches ...	169	Grass Seed for Gouldian Finches ...	63
The Common Swift ...	200	<b>HARPER, E. W., F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.</b>	
<b>CARPENTER, The Hon. Mrs.</b>		White-breasted Kingfisher in Captivity ...	39
My Aviary ...	135	The Shama ...	149
<b>CATLEUGH, W. T.</b>		<b>HAWKE, The Hon. MARY</b>	
Longevity of Grey Parrots ...	196	Nesting of Virginian Nightingales ...	231
Parrot Finches breeding ...	214	<b>HAWKINS, L. W.</b>	
<b>CHARRINGTON, Mrs.</b>		Breeding Experiences in 1900 ...	29
Aviary Notes ...	49	<b>HESLTON, H. C.</b>	
<b>CHAWNER, Miss</b>		Hodgson's Fruitsucker ...	12
A Nesting Parrakeet ...	86	North American Birds ...	107
<b>COOPER, JAMES</b>		<b>HODGSON, Miss</b>	
German Log-Nests ...	85	Long-tailed Grassfinch ...	19
Foreign Birds out-of-doors ...	86	Avicultural Notes... ..	43
<b>COPE, E. E.</b>		<b>JOHNSTON, Mrs.</b>	
Baldness in Birds ...	161	Sick Crimson Wing; Eclectus nesting ...	125
<b>CRESSWELL, O. E., M.A.</b>		Nesting of Leadbeater's Cockatoo ...	191
Nesting of a Hen Nonpareil, and Change of Plumage in Cocks ...	173	Conures killing their young ...	215
<b>DELL, CHARLES</b>		<b>LASCELLES, The Hon. GERALD</b>	
Breeding of Sharp-tailed Finch and Silverbill Hybrids ...	44	Demoiselle Cranes ...	89
<b>DOUGLAS, W. C., F.Z.S.</b>		<b>LEADER, J. V.</b>	
Breeding Gouldian Finches ...	103	Parson and Grassfinches ...	61
<b>DUNLEATH, The Lady</b>		Kingfishers ...	84
An Outdoor Aviary ...	53	<b>LEIGH, H. BOUGHTON</b>	
Treatment of Small Foreign Birds in Winter ...	62	Eagle Owls ...	108
<b>DUTTON, The Hon. and Rev. Canon</b>		<b>MEADE-WALDO, E. G. B.</b>	
Wintering Foreign Birds ...	62	Owls ...	111
<i>Carysotis bougueti</i> ...	109	Gouldian Finches ...	127
		Eagle Owls ...	159



	PAGE.		PAGE.
MOERSCHELL, F.		SETH-SMITH, D., F.Z.S. M.B.O.U.	
Identification of African Bird ...	84	Ornamental Waterfowl ...	83
NICHOLSON, ALFRED E.		Palace Bird Show ...	90
Breeding of the Rufous-tailed		The Cape Sparrow ...	165, 215
Grassfinch ...	219	SPEED, HEDLEY	
OATES, F. W.		Intelligent Pets ...	147
Breeding Madagascar Lovebird,		ST. QUINTIN, W. H.	
&c. ...	41	The Breeding Season, 1900 ...	73
PAGE, W. T., F.Z.S.		Gouldian Finches ...	82
How to Keep Small Foreign		Breeding of the Roller in cap-	
Birds out-of-doors in winter 37, 60		tivity ...	217
Australian Bower-birds ...	69	THOMASSET, B. C.	
Satin Bower-bird ...	148	Nesting of Green-winged Doves	159
Miscellaneous Experiences of		THOMPSON, Lady	
Out-door Aviculture ...	152	Longevity of Parrots ...	42
Notes from the Zoo ...	167	WEST, Miss	
PHILLIPPS, REGINALD		Treatment of Small Foreign Birds	
L. and P. O. Show ...	21	in Winter ...	87
A tame Barbary Turtle ...	44	WIENER, AUG. F.	
Accidents ..	55	The Gouldian Finch ...	1, 63, 64
A Mistake ...	75	Management of Small Foreign	
The Pied Grallina ...	83	Birds in Winter ...	17
Odds and Ends ...	118, 136	Aviary for Weavers ...	58
What's in a Name? ...	162	Avicultural Notes ...	81
Mice and Strychnine ...	175	WILLIAMS, Mrs. LESLIE	
A supposed New Whistling-bird		Random Paragraphs :—	
184, 202		Nos. I. — IV. ...	225
ROBERTSON, Mrs.		Letters on the Birds of Jamaica :—	
Red-faced Finch ...	146	No. I. ...	211
Breeding the Red-faced Finch ...	161	No. II. ...	227
ROTCHE, CLAUDE D.		No. III. ...	229
Gouldian Finches ...	63		
SAVAGE, A.			
Gorgeously - coloured Foreign			
Birds ...	199		

*H. Grace*

ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS are NOW DUE.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

THE

# Avicultural Magazine.

BRING THE JOURNAL, OF

THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY

FOR THE STUDY OF

FOREIGN AND BRITISH BIRDS.

VOL. VII.—No. 1.

*All rights reserved.*

NOVEMBER, 1900.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Officers for the year 1900-1901 ... ..	i.
List of Members ... ..	ii.
Rules of the Avicultural Society ... ..	ix.
The Society's Medal .. ...	x.
The Gouldian Finch, by A. F. WIENER ... ..	1
The Satin Bower-bird, by A. G. BUTLER, Ph.D. ... ..	7
Hodgson's Fruitsucker, by H. C. HESLTON ... ..	12
Breeding of the Malabar Mynah, by the Rev. C. D. FARRAR ... ..	13
The Management of Small Foreign Birds in Winter, by A. F. WIENER ... ..	17

### CORRESPONDENCE :—

" The Long-tailed Grassfinch " ... ..	19
Shama without Tail ... ..	19
Proposed Aviary for Weavers ... ..	20

LONDON :

R. H. PORTER & SON, 7, PRINCES ST., CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.

Printed by W. T. Moulton & Co., 4, Church Street, Brighton.

# THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY.



## NOTICES TO MEMBERS.

**NOTE.**—The attention of members and others is directed to the price of bound Volumes and back numbers of the Magazine, which has been considerably decreased.

The Subscription to the Avicultural Society is 10/- per annum, due on the 1st of November in each year, and should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. L. BONHOTE. The entrance fee is 2/6. The "Avicultural Magazine" is sent free to members monthly. Members joining at any time during the year are entitled to the back numbers for the current year.

All communications should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary, J. L. BONHOTE, Ditton Hall, Fen Ditton, Cambridge; *except MSS. and correspondence for the Magazine*, which should be sent to the Editor, O. E. CRESSWELL, Morney Cross, near Hereford. All letters must contain a stamped envelope for reply. Any change of address should be at once communicated to the Secretary.

Advice is given, *by post*, by members of the Council to members of the Society upon all avicultural subjects. All queries are to be sent to the Hon. Secretary, to be by him forwarded to the members of the Council who will answer them.

### ☛ Note change of Publisher.

The Magazine is published by Mr. R. H. PORTER, of 7, Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W., and is dispatched by him monthly to the members. Orders for extra copies, back numbers, and bound volumes (accompanied by a remittance) should be addressed to the Publisher.

Cases for binding Vol. VI. can now be obtained from Mr. R. H. PORTER, 7, Princes Street, Cavendish Square, W., price 1/3 each. They will be forwarded on receipt of cash with order, post free and carefully packed. Mr. PORTER is prepared to undertake the binding of the Magazine for 1/-, plus cost of case and postage.

N. B.—Receipts are sent to each member on receipt of their subscription. Would members, therefore, who do not receive the receipt within reasonable time after posting their subscription, communicate with the Secretary without delay.

☛ The attention of members is called to the price of subscription, which it has been found necessary to raise to 10/- per annum.

### BOUND COPIES OF "AVICULTURAL MAGAZINE."

The following can be obtained from the publishers at the prices named, which include postage :

Vol. II.,	to members,	3/- ;	to the public,	5/-.
" III.	"	8/6	"	10/6.
" IV.	"	8/6	"	10/6.
" V.	"	8/6	"	10/6.
" VI.	"	8/6	"	10/6.

All back numbers 1/- each. Postage 6d. extra.

(Continued on page iii. of cover).

**The Practical Scientific Cabinet Makers.**  
**J. T. CROCKETT & SON,**

ESTABLISHED OVER 50 YEARS.

**MAKERS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF**  
**CABINET CASES AND STORE BOXES.**  
**TAXIDERMY IN ALL ITS BRANCHES.**

---

**Apparatus and Appliances for the use of Specimens for Entomologists, Botanists, Ornithologists, Geologists, Mineralogists, Numismatists, Conchologists, etc.,**

And for the use of Lecturers, Science Teachers, College Students, &c.

---

**MUSEUMS FITTED AND ARRANGED.**

---

**Specially made Cabinets for Birds' Eggs and Skins, the Drawers graduate in depth and are all interchangeable.**

---

STORE BOXES, fitted with Camphor Cells, 2/3, 3/6, 4/3, 5/3  
SETTING BOARDS, flat or oval, 1-in. 5d., 1½-in. 7d., 2-in. 9d., 2½-in. 11d., 3-in. 1/2, 4-in. 1/4, 5-in. 1/8.

PLAIN RING NETS, wire or cane, 1 6, 2/-, 2/3. FOLDING NETS, 3/-, 4/-  
UMBRELLA NETS, self-acting, 6 9. POCKET BOXES, 6d., 8d., 11d., 1/5.  
SUGARING TINS, with brush, 1/4, 1/10.

SETTING HOUSES, flat or oval boards, 8/6, 10/-. Cork back, 12 9.

BREEDING CAGES, 2/3. Improved style, fitted with tanks, 3/7.

COLEOPTERIST COLLECTING BOTTLES, 1/4, 1/6.

INSECT AND EGG CASES, from 2/3 to 10/- Best Steel FORCEPS, 1/5 pair.  
TAXIDERMISTS' COMPANION, containing eight useful articles for Skinning, 9/6.

EGG DRILLS, from 8d. BLOW PIPES from 2d. to 5d.

ZINC RELAXING BOXES, 8d., 11d. NESTED CHIP BOXES, 4 doz. 7d.

ENTOMOLOGICAL PINS from 1/- per oz. ZINC LARVÆ BOXES, 8d. 11d., 1/5.

BEST WHITE CEMENT, 5d. a Bottle. SPECIAL CORK CARPET, 9d. per square foot.

CABINET CORKS, 7in by 3½in., 11d. and 1/2 per dozen sheets.

The "PERFECTION" FLAT SETTING BOARDS, for English style of Setting. Supersedes the old Boards. Same prices as ordinary Setting Boards.

---

*All Goods not approved may be exchanged, or money returned.*

*All Goods Store Prices. All Best Work.*

*Estimates given.*

*Great Advantages in dealing direct with Makers.*

---

Send for Full Detailed Price List before ordering elsewhere.

**7a, PRINCES ST., CAVENDISH SQ.,**

(7 Doors from Oxford Circus) **LONDON, W.**

**Factories: 34, RIDING HOUSE ST, and OGLE ST., W**

*Patronized by their  
Royal Highnesses*



*The Prince and  
Princess of Wales,  
&c.*

---

# CROSS,

## KING OF WILD BEAST MERCHANTS,

# LIVERPOOL.

---

### **500 GREY AFRICAN PARROTS.**

10,000 PAIRS of SMALL BIRDS.

Fresh Arrivals Daily.

The Highest Price given for Birds, Beasts, Shells, Curiosities, Skins, & other Stock.

Speciality—Splendid African Grey Parrots with Crimson Tails.

---

### **A HERD OF JAPANESE SIKA DEER.**

30,000 Gold Fish.

Quantity of Foreign Water Fowl.

---

## **CROSS'S TRADING MENAGERIE**

Is always on View for Visitors who are desirous of seeing the Wild Animals  
At present it contains numerous Lions, Tigers, and Elephants.

Always something new.

Hundreds of Arrivals Weekly.

---

### **HUNGARIAN PARTRIDGES.**

Mr. CROSS begs to state that it is now the season for Importing Hungarian Partridges. These Birds are identical with the English Partridge; but are imported from Hungary.

They are unrelated to any bird in Great Britain, so that it is absolutely certain that new blood is introduced, conducive to a numerous and strong progeny, thus preventing the weakening or dying out of your stock.

N. B.—To prevent disappointment, orders should be sent early, on account of the uncertainty of supply through severity of the weather.

---

### **BIRDS AND ANIMALS STUFFED AND PRESERVED.**

**70,000 Bundles Peacock Feathers.**

---

NATIONAL TELEPHONES 6491 and 7427.

Telegrams and Cablegrams: "CROSS, LIVERPOOL."

### III.

#### CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION.

Mr. H. W. BURGESS, High Street, Bushey, Herts.

*Proposed by Dr. A. G. BUTLER.*

Mr. W. C. DOUGLAS, F.Z.S., 9, Trebovir Road, Earl's Court, S.W.

*Proposed by Mr. AUG. F. WIENER.*

The Hon. MARY HAWKE, Wighill Park, Tadcaster.

*Proposed by Mr. J. WATSON.*

Mr. HEDLEY SPEED, 12, Victoria Park, Bangor.

Mr. W. S. HILL, 14, Thirlmere Street, Hightown, Manchester.

*Proposed by Mr. J. L. BONHOTE.*

---

#### CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Miss HOWMAN, Sherwood, Essex Grove, Upper Norwood, S.E.

The Rev. H. D. ASTLEY, Benham Park, Newbury.

Mr. R. FRANKLIN-HINDLE, 44, Grosvenor Road, Birkdale, Southport.

---

#### MEMBERS' SALE AND EXCHANGE COLUMN.

*The charge for advertisements in this column is 2d. for each bird or species of bird advertised. Not more than twelve words will be allowed for any bird or species of bird. Names and addresses of advertisers, free. All advertisements should reach the Secretary at least 14 days before the end of the month, and MUST, in every case, be prepaid in stamps. No advertisements will be inserted unless this rule be complied with. The Council reserve the right to refuse any advertisement they consider undesirable. Each advertisement should be written on a separate sheet of paper, with the name and address of the advertiser at the foot.*

Pair Barn Owls, magnificent condition, 7/6; cage-reared hen Bullfinch, 2/6.

Dr. CRESWELL, Kingston-on-Thames.

What offers?—"The Ibis," Vol II.; clean, perfect, containing 13 beautifully coloured plates.

Miss TATE, Allerburn, Ailnwick.

Pair Orange-flanked Parrakeets (*Brutogerys pyrrhopterus*), healthy and acclimatized, 50/-.

C. D. ROTCH, Waterloo, Liverpool.

Pair thoroughly hardy healthy Parson Finches, also odd cock. What offer? Exchange for small foreigners.

VINER LEEDER, SWANSEA.

Fine pair Saffron-finches, have nested in outdoor aviary, 5/-; young cock Budgerigars, in outdoor aviary, 2/- each.

The Hon. Mrs. CARPENTER, Kiplin, Northallerton.

Pair Parson Finches, 12/6; pair Pekin Robins, 5/-; pair young Zebra Finches, 4/-; hen Zebra Waxbill, 1/6; all perfectly healthy and from outdoor aviary.

Miss R. LYON, Harwood, Horsham.

Cock Shama, 50/-; Blue-headed Tanager, 30/-; Californian Quails, aviary-bred, 20/- pair; Grey Cardinals, been in outdoor aviary months, 10/- each; Weavers, in colour, 5/- pair; Passerine Doves, outdoor aviary all last winter, 25/-; Budgerigars, cocks 3/-, hens 5/-; two baby Grey Parrots and cages, my possession over three months, good whistlers, 45/-.

ARTHUR GILL, M.R.C.V.S., Bexley Heath, Kent.

---

#### WANTS.

*(These are charged for at the same rate as birds for sale).*

Any kind of African Serins. Dr. CRESWELL, Kingston-on-Thames.

Acclimatized Cordon Bleus, cock Cutthroat, and small Waxbills.

VINER LEEDER, SWANSEA.

#### IV.

##### ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

As <i>Editor</i> —Mr. D. SETH-SMITH	.. Proposed by Mr. Philipps. Seconded by Mr. Cresswell.
As <i>Secretary</i> —Mr. R. PHILLIPPS	.. Proposed by Mr. Bonhote. Seconded by Mr. Seth-Smith.
As <i>Scrutineer</i> —Mr. C. L. ROTHERA	.. Proposed by Mr. Cresswell. Seconded by Dr. A. G. Butler.
As <i>Auditor</i> —Mr. W. SWAYSLAND	.. Proposed by Mr. Cresswell. Seconded by Mr. Bonhote.

##### MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

All the members of the existing Council stand for re-election, *viz.* :

Miss R. ALDERSON.	Mr. R. HUMPHRYS.
The Rev. H. D. ASTLEY.	Mr. E. G. B. MEADE-WALDO.
Dr. A. G. BUTLER.	Mr. J. SARGENT.
The Rev. C. D. FARRAR.	Mr. W. H. ST. QUINTIN.
Mr. H. J. FULLJAMES.	Mr. W. T. PAGE.

##### *New Candidates—*

Mr. O. E. CRESSWELL.	Mr. ARTHUR GILL.
Proposed by Mr. Bonhote.	Seconded by Dr. Butler.

Messrs. PHILLIPPS and SETH-SMITH become members *ex-officio*, and Mr. CRESSWELL and Mr. GILL taking their places there will be no contested election.

##### EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS.

The following members are excluded from the Society under Rule 3.

Mr. J. W. MURGAROYD, Bradford Grange, Howden, E. Yorks.  
Mr. J. H. A. REAY, 7, Rosemount, Wallington, Surrey.

## Highly Important to Breeders !

##### TO ORDER.

Fresh, not dried, Ant Cocoons .. .. 5/- per lb.  
(Without these no great success in Breeding possible).

##### IN STOCK.

Best dried Ant Cocoons extant .. .. 5/- ..  
Mealworms .. .. 7/6 ..  
From end of September Mealworms will be 5/- ..

**R. MASCHKE, 54, Devonshire Road,  
HOLLOWAY, N.**

(Late Upper Street, Islington).

### III.

NOTICES TO MEMBERS—Continued from page ii. of cover.

#### CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION.

Mrs. GARTER, The Delta, Walmer, Kent.

*Proposed by Miss R. ALDERSON.*

Heer F. E. BLAAUW, Gooiluet, 'S. G'raveland, Hilversum, Holland.

*Proposed by the Hon. and Rev. Canon DUTTON.*

Master NOEL, PHILLIPPS, 21, Addison Gardens, Kensington, W.

*Proposed by Mr. REGINALD PHILLIPPS.*

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mr. W. NICHOLSON, 1, Ord Place, Gateshead-on-Tyne.

#### MEMBERS' SALE AND EXCHANGE COLUMN.

*The charge for advertisements in this column is 2d. for each bird or species of bird advertised. Not more than twelve words will be allowed for any bird or species of bird. Names and addresses of advertisers, free. All advertisements should reach the Secretary at least 14 days before the end of the month, and MUST, in every case, be prepaid in stamps. No advertisements will be inserted unless this rule be complied with. The Council reserve the right to refuse any advertisement they consider undesirable. Each advertisement should be written on a separate sheet of paper, with the name and address of the advertiser at the foot.*

Pair Canary-winged Parrakeets, perfect condition, from cold outdoor aviary, 32/6. R. FRANKLIN HINDLE, 44, Grosvenor Road, Birkdale, Southport.

Cock Shama, 50/-; cock Nonpareil, 8/6; Greater Spotted Woodpecker, 10/-; Lory, very beautiful plumage, 50/-; Lesser Lemon-crested Cockatoo, 20/-; cock Virginian Nightingale, 15/-; Californian Quails, aviary-bred, 20/- pair; Reeve, 7/6. GILL, M.R.C.V.S., Bexley Heath, Kent.

Pair Aurora-finches, perfect plumage, nesting out of doors, £5. GILL, M.R.C.V.S., Bexley Heath, Kent.

Very fine healthy hen Rosella, been some years in aviary, 20/-; cock Bleeding-heart Dove, 20/-; pair Nicobar Pigeons, 45/-; pair Indian Green-wing Doves, 15/-. All healthy and acclimatized. Offers in exchange. A. F. GILLET, Duffield, Derby.

Pairs—Rufous-tailed Grassfinches, perfect condition, have nested, £2; Orange-cheeks, 5/-; Zebra Waxbills, 5/-; Green Avadavats, 6/-; Cordon-bleus, 3/-. Hens—Cordon-bleus, 3/-; Lavender Finch, 3/-. All above have wintered in Scotland. Four young cock Long-tailed Grassfinches, 5 weeks old, 10/- each.

W. FOULIS, Penicuik, Scotland.

Pair Magpie Mannikins, 18 months in outdoor aviary, 4/-.

O. E. CRESSWELL, Morney Cross, near Hereford.

Four Rosellas, 10/- each; 3 Cockatiels, 6/- each; pair Plumhead Parrakeets, 2 years in outdoor aviary, 12/-; Budgerigars, 3/6 a couple.

Mrs. LANCASTER, 7, Victoria Terrace, Walsall.

#### WANTS.

*(These are charged for at the same rate as birds for sale).*

Redrump, Turquoise, Blue Bonnet, or other rare Parrakeets, true pairs only. W. FOULIS, Penicuik, Scotland.

Pairs—Green Avadavats, Cordon-bleus, Whydah, Weaver and Tanager cocks. Lavender and Fire Finches. Waterfowl, foreign Doves. Buy or exchange in Fantail and Tumbler Pigeons and other foreign birds.

J. VINER LEEDER, Bryn Road, Swansea.

Hen Mealy Rosella; hen Pennant.

Mrs. LANCASTER, 7, Victoria Terrace, Walsall.

*Continued on page iv. of Advertisements.*



IV.

**THE FOREIGN BIRD EXHIBITORS' LEAGUE.**

---

The name of this Society has been changed to

**"THE FOREIGN BIRD CLUB."**

The Notices to Members are now published in

**"FOREIGN BIRD NOTES."**

Full particulars of the Club, and specimen copies of "Foreign Bird Notes," can be obtained from

H. R. FILLMER, *Hon. Sec.*,

52. SHIP STREET, BRIGHTON.

*[The above is an advertisement and is paid for as such].*

---

**SUCCESS IN BIRD KEEPING & BREEDING**

CAN ONLY BE SECURED BY USING

**\* ABRAHAM'S \***

WORLD-FAMED

**Specialties in BIRD FOOD.**

---

**LARGEST STOCK OF RARE FOREIGN BIRDS**

IN ENGLAND.

*For complete Price List apply to—*

**J. ABRAHAM'S.**

Naturalist & Importer,

**191 & 192, ST. GEORGE STREET, EAST**

**LONDON, E.**

---

*J. ABRAHAM'S' is the oldest and most reliable  
Establishment in England.*







3 2044 072 192 040

